The Art of Collecting Fancy Paper: Understanding the Assignment of Values to Collecting Alternative Movie Posters

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the Alternative Movie Poster (AMP) and the collecting community surrounding it, adjacent to the position of modern collecting pursuits. This field presents an opportunity to evaluate contemporary practices in a modern context, demonstrating how collectors assign implicit and explicit, objective and subjective values to strategize and legitimise their actions.

To conduct this research, thematic discourse analysis of interview data with gatekeepers and collectors was used. This was supported through primary investigation into the key components integral to the AMP, namely its inherent collectability, film as subject matter, and art and craft production processes, with much of this content informing the line of questioning adopted for interviews.

The thesis moves to discuss the values assigned to production, which are enhanced and exploited by the AMP to increase desirability. This repositions the concept of the 'instant collectible', what it is and how it can be used to fulfil collector interests. These overengineered production values also assign sufficient credibility in proxy to the subject matter represented in the AMP, fulfilling collector desires to connect with film through a tangible vessel.

Bourdieu's 'thinking tools', principally his notion of capital, aids the analysis of values assigned by collectors to practice. Their inherent desire to collect AMPs is based on a want to, knowingly or unknowingly, consistently accumulate capital, presenting a tangential topic of interest when considering traditional expectations outlined in collecting studies. Capital rationalises collecting practice where it has previously been considered, in part, irrational, and this in turn allows the collector to justify their interests in the adjacent fields integral to AMP collecting. However, evidence points towards the internal use of 'potential fixed capital' to fulfil subjective personal interests ultimately providing assurance of the self. This is inherently linked to tangibility, where the production values discussed can be considered 'hypertangible' to fully realise and release any potential capital value.

These findings bring into focus the ongoing relevance of Bourdieu to the analysis of contemporary concerns, notably the use of capital in establishing an understanding of collecting activity. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the collector internally utilises capital in justifying and legitimising collecting, a consideration which could be introduced into the wider field of study. The concept of the 'fan collector', being able to engage physically with an ethereal construct is not a new insight, but the thesis does recognise their strategy in relation to production values. Here a focus on quality and artistic merit raises the profile of the AMP adjacent to the text it represents, meeting certain criterial needs of the individual whose very identity is bound to such interests.

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Acknowledgements

My life has been bound to Northumbria for a long time now. I met my future wife during our first week together in our Halls of Residence, and we've been inseparable ever since. Unfortunately for her, this means she has ultimately been corralled into being a part of writing this thesis (if only she had known this would happen when we met). Meeting Liz over a decade ago during my first experience of University and then writing this here, feels like time has come full circle. But we have done so much between and I couldn't be more proud or happy of every last one of those things. Not only has Liz had to put up with my AMP collecting, but she has also had to listen to me drone on about this thesis a lot. There has been complaining, ideas, research, complaining, interviews, writing up, more complaining, and throughout it all she has been a constant support and my grammatical guru. We welcomed our first child, Fred, just over a year ago, not always ideal timing when finishing off a PhD but what a motivator he has been. You quickly find that you can no longer procrastinate, babies are time consuming in the best possible way. Every moment with them is precious, but so too are the moments in-between to get some work done (while trying to resist a sneaky nap). It is impossible for me to comment as to how important my little family is to me and if I was to try to explain it then the wordcount for the thesis would need to be doubled. I do hope they know this as without them I would be nothing.

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Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Ethics Committee 30/07/15

I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 90,280 words

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

> I remember when the Star Wars releases were happening, I was literally at my desk and my hand was shaking at my computer. I'm so nervous I am going to miss out on this thing […] it's so powerful that it creates that kind of energy
>
> (Brock Higgins, Co-Owner Skuzzles Prints: Personal Interview 2016)

Higgins' experience is one of exhilaration, his description delivered as to relieve the adrenaline of the moment, overwhelmed at the mere possibility that he may succeed. What was he doing? Buying limited edition Alternative Movie Posters (from here referred to as AMPs) online. To the average person Higgin's retelling might sound like an exaggerated overreaction, but to the community surrounding AMP collecting, it sounds like an average Thursday[1]. This particular set of posters designed by relatively unknown graphic artist, Olly Moss in an edition of 400 copies, sold out in seconds in 2012. Subsequently, these same three posters representing the original *Star Wars* trilogy have sold on the aftermarket for upwards of $10,000, their original sale price, $150[2]. Representative of a contemporary movement in pop culture collecting and collecting activity itself, the practices surrounding both the production and collection of AMPs facilitate the discussion to follow. The goal of this thesis is to investigate how these posters are assigned values, economic and beyond, and how these values are

[1] Thursday is most commonly 'drop day', the day when a number of major AMP companies release new prints for sale.

[2] Though one collector interviewed as part of this thesis believes that a private sale in 2018 resulted in the set selling for around £13,000

utilised to justify the feverous and visceral engagement in collecting that Higgins describes.

(Image 1 – Moss' posters for the *Star Wars* trilogy)

Alternative Movie Posters

To offer some insight into the terminology, the phrase 'Alternative Movie Poster/s' has also been utilised to broadly describe this collecting community by the New York Times 2017, The Observer 2015, and Shortlist Magazine 2012 as well as popular pop culture centric websites Indiewire 2017, and Slashfilm 2016 (this is by no means an exhaustive list). As part of the research conducted in line with this thesis, interviewees Jack Durieux, Brock Higgins and James Park, all producers and distributors of AMPs, used and responded to this term when discussing their businesses. This is further referenced/acknowledged in the title of Matthew Chojnacki's 2013 book *Alternative Movie Posters,* recognised by the IPPY (Independent Publisher Book Awards) the following year, receiving the Gold award in the Coffee Table Book category[3].

[3] AMP producer/distributor Mondo, also won in this category in 2018 for their book, *The Art of Mondo.*

At its most broad an AMP could be any pop culture artwork, including fan art, focusing on film as its subject matter and then disseminated physically as a printed image. At its purest, the AMP is a limited-edition, screenprinted poster (mondo.com 2019, skuzzles.com 2019), produced under licensed agreement with film distributors and most commonly printed at 24" x 36" in dimension (Burke 2016). It is recognised in its production, and by its intended audience, as a product of artistic integrity[4], while remaining distinctly separate from publicity materials directly associated with the property as produced by studio marketing teams. This list of characteristics can be paralleled against the categorisation of AMPs within the largest online database focusing on the field of AMP collecting and digital archival, expressobeans.com.

Here, AMPs are initially added to the database through compiling information against the following formatting category headings: Title (Of Art but often Title of Property), Artist, Manufacturer (Print House), Year, Class (Cinema), Status (official/licensed), Run (edition size), Technique (print format), Size, Markings (signed/numbered). Further information specific to the poster can be added to the listing, for example, paper type, specialist inks, gallery, events, awards, venue (for screenings/festivals), and any narrative elements regarding production and release (e.g. artist notes, further emphasising their involvement in the process). While this initially aids definition of an AMP, it further demonstrates the importance of production methodology which seeks to distance the AMP from other film art and film posters, enforced in Higgins' comment that in his AMP distribution company: "we pride ourselves in creating images that don't exist anywhere else" (Personal Interview 2016).

[4] Most online AMP 'gallery's' describe their products (AMPs) as works of art, including Vice Press (vice-press.com), Black Dragon Press (blackdragonpress.com) and Nautilus Art Prints (nautilus-artprints.com).

The Origins of the AMP

AMPs originated from the field of screenprinted gig poster art (Brock Higgins Personal Interview 2018; James Park Personal Interview 2018; Burke 2016), a parallel interest with a significant history associated with the promotion of independent music events. Where screenprinting gig posters was born of necessity it shifted to being deemed a process which promoted aesthetic, artistic and collectible considerations. James Henshaw of AMP distributor Vice Press notes: "It's a very tactile medium screenprint, and it's the difference between a £5 poster you can pick up at HMV" (Personal Interview 2016), giving gig posters, and AMPs to follow a further point of distinction.

Where a number of artists, such as Frank Kozik, work/ed within the 'gig poster' field as early as the 1980s, a surge in popularity of screenprinted limited-edition prints in the 90s saw this field grow into a marketplace built on a basis of collecting. Further significant growth occurred after the millennium, where festival events such as Flatstock (first held in 2002) facilitated this growing collecting phenomenon. The nuances of screenprinting naturally lead to a limited number of posters being produced, this inherent scarcity resulting in desirability as these gig posters were often difficult to obtain outside of attending the venue where they were being sold as merchandise. Kozik was one of the first artists in this area to engage with this demand, initially signing and numbering prints (signifying their limited nature and artistic value), then introducing a mail order system (prior to digital distribution), which delivered posters to individuals, collectors and affiliated stores[5].

[5] See documentary *Just Like Being There* (dir. Shannon 2012) for further insight into this field beyond the constraints and focus of this thesis.

Regarding the growth of AMPs, a specific cadre of key players were responsible in facilitating AMP production and availability to a wider audience[6]. Tim League's franchise of Alamo Drafthouse cinemas, labelling themselves as a chain of movie theatres which 'celebrate film', led to the subsidiary brand of MondoTees (now Mondo) being set up alongside the Austin based theatre. MondoTees, founded in 2001, began as a small operation selling screenprinted tee-shirts to audiences attending screenings. Between 2004 and 2007 this subsidiary business began to grow as a brand in its own right, moving away from tee-shirts and into AMPs. Although much of their output was met with healthy demand it was not until 2010, alongside the release of AMPs for the 'Star Wars Trilogy'[7], that company founder Rob Jones cites as a break through moment in the history of the company. It was Jones's suggestion in the first instance to move towards producing screenprinted posters for movie screenings as a reaction to the aforementioned success of the gig poster marketplace where AMP artists Daniel Danger and Tim Doyle cite this move as an opposition to the standard 'shopped'[8] one sheets. Three years later creative directors Mitch Putnam and Justin Ishmael were employed to guide the burgeoning company, with the primary aim of securing significant licensing agreements to officially produce and distribute AMPs to a growing audience of collectors.

This developing community of collectors soon led to nearly every print selling out within seconds of release on MondoTees website, continually invigorating high speculative demand for AMPs (Rob Jones, Daniel Danger in Burke 2016). Cyclically

[6] A number of key players and gate keepers have been interviewed as part of this thesis. Details of their affiliations can be found in the appendix.
[7] Including AMPs designed by Olly Moss and Tyler Stout, artists who soon became in demand across the field and whose posters continue to sell on the aftermarket for thousands of dollars (there are records of the Olly Moss trilogy set selling for around $13,000).
[8] A derogative term targeting current trends to produce studio marketing and publicity using photoshop to construct generic collage images of celebrity 'floating heads'.

this led to ‘sold-out’ AMPs significantly increasing in price on the aftermarket, facilitated online through auction sites, specialist sites (expressobeans.com) and the community itself. Beyond this, even older posters from Mondo which were previously considered undesirable at the time of their release subsequently became highly sought after further expanding the community and Mondo’s reputation. A number of AMPs have subsequently sold at reputable auction houses, for example, a print for *Goldfinger* (dir. Guy Hamilton 1964) by artist Todd Slater selling at Christies for £2125 as early as 2013[9].

This potential profitability for AMP distributors, as well as collectors selling on the aftermarket, became a driving force behind the constant growth of the AMP community. Kevin Burke’s 2016 documentary about AMPs, *24x36: A Movie About Movie Posters*, reinforces the importance of economic value to AMP collecting, with those posters spotlighted in the film often accompanied by graphics indicating an 'Approximate Resale Value'. The exclusivity facilitated by limited edition printing practices underpins this speculative value and exploits the need for collectors to attempt to purchase at the point of sale for fear of not being able to afford desirable AMPs at a later date for an inflated price.

However, while there are those individuals who purely seek to profiteer from buying and selling AMPs, the community is generally made of members who share a deep-seated affinity for film. AMP collecting is not for the general public, or even the casual film fan, it is for those individuals who consider themselves instrumentally linked to film and who further self-define as ‘collectors’. Jack Durieux, co-founder of AMP producer and distributor Nautilus Art Prints comments:

[9] Original price for this poster, released in 2007, was only $20

> First, you belong to a community and this hobby relies on being part of a community, making friends and talking about similar interests. It's not something mainstream, it's niche, snobbism, of being one of the few who know better, it's cultural, it's cool. It's like 'I was a geek, I was laughed at for not playing soccer, but now I am a nerd and I am making good money, and I am a cool geek and a collector
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

The geek collector, where fandom, film, and collecting are interwoven to fulfil notions of identity generation alongside presenting gratification through the physical manifestation of the collectors more ethereal interests is an interesting construct. Collecting AMPs allows those individuals with shared interests a point of contact with their passions, the AMP itself acting as a tangible vessel of self-expression through collecting practice while physically engaging with the ethereal medium of film.

The community has also led to successful gallery events, mystery screenings with accompanying AMPs, festival and convention appearances at SDCC, NXNW and Thought Bubble, culminating in Mondo's own variation of the convention aptly titled MondoCon. This event takes the format of a standard convention hall but limits exhibitors to those associated with its business interests, bringing poster artists and fans together in a significant physical space, demonstrating the reach of AMPs and the fervour with which collectors approach their shared interests. Other distributers which have come into the marketplace include Bottleneck Gallery, Skuzzles, Hero Complex Gallery, Spoke Art and Grey Matter Art, all of which are based in the US and Canada and have found success in the field. A number of European equivalents have been established in recent years including Black Dragon Press and Vice Press in the

UK, and Nautilus Art Prints in Belgium. Though not an exhaustive list this again demonstrates the widespread growth and interest in the field of AMP collecting.

Producing the AMP

One of the definitive production markers that has determined the success of AMPs is that they are (most often) screenprinted[10]. This clearly differentiates them from the conventions of modern film posters distributed as part of marketing campaigns, as James Henshaw comments: “Collectors want that, we can create something high-end, rather than lithographs. Lithos are not bad but they are prints you’d stick on the wall with push pins, not the kind of prints you would frame and hang in the hallway”. They are resultingly imbued with a distinct level of artisanal quality through the artistic process directly related to a craft-based printing method.

Those commissioned to produce AMP art are professional artists, illustrators and graphic designers, who usually work predominantly outside of the community. This separates them from the ‘jobbing graphic designer’ hired by a studio to create the standard publicity materials expected of contemporary movie marketing campaigns. This is not to dismiss the ability of these designer’s, who are employed to execute a specific brief of exacting expectations surrounding the studios ‘assets’. They require facial recognition, colour schemes and simple imagery, allowing an audience to recognise the star performers and the theme of a movie at a glance, compositionally becoming a staple of modern film posters across the 1990s to the present, supported through advancements in computer aided design (CAD).

[10] The nuances of screenprinting will be discussed across this thesis, including its method as well as the apparent values it bestows on the final product.

AMP artists are given more freedom to exercise their ability to produce artwork which respects film and cinema, naturally deemed significantly important to the community of fan collectors. These designers (and the AMPs they are responsible for) are now winning Clio Key Art Awards[11], demonstrating a positive acknowledgement from the wider film industry and further legitimising the value of the AMP inside and outside of the field. Mondo's AMPs are even collected, curated and archived in the library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. While some steps have been taken by studios within mainstream cinema (particularly from those associated with independent film or re-releases) to use illustrated art, this is still minimal. This is a grassroots movement, where AMPs are created by artists, printed by craftspeople, distributed by 'galleries', but where demand is ultimately driven by collectors. They expect screenprinted, artistically revered alternative movie posters, and anything else will not suffice. It is the reasoning assigned to this becomes instrumental to the later investigation presented in this thesis.

The Power of Posters

The initial basis of any value assigned to the AMP is bound to the history of the poster itself. The poster's intrinsic communicative power, the ability of the medium to adapt, its relative cost effectiveness, and its potential to drive engagement of an audience, have led to it being used to propagate and promote a variety of goods, services and causes. As Timmers notes:

> Their voice can vary from plain announcement to emotional, moral or intellectual appeal, or to an imperative advertisement. Also, being cast in a

[11] An awards ceremony (under the banner of Clio Entertainment) established by *The Hollywood Reporter* in 1971 which, amongst other areas, celebrates film marketing and promotional artwork.

> colloquial idiom, they can change their tone and vocabulary to express and reflect shifting cultural values and codes of behaviour
>
> (Timmers 1998: 8)

In this way the poster has found itself to be attractive, not just as a tool for communication but also as an artefact of cultural and historical significance. This value is enforced through the impetus to collect posters, not just by individuals, but from culturally reverent organisations, with poster centric museum exhibitions proving universally popular. While the following list is not exhaustive, nor does it give any depth as to the particularities of each event, it does highlight the widespread longstanding cultural relevance of the poster as deemed by a number of illustrious establishments:

Posters displayed at The Royal Aquarium: 1894-95 and 1896

International Advertising Exhibition in White City: 1920

Advertising Exhibition in Berlin: 1929

Exhibition of British and Foreign Posters in Museum's North Court: 1931

Art Nouveau Designs and Posters by Alphonse Mucha in V&A Museum: 1963

Aubrey Beardsley Exhibition in V&A Museum: 1966

Posters of a Lifetime in Bethnal Green Museum: 1973

Political Posters from Eastern Europe and USSR in V&A Museum: 1990

Green Images: Posters and Printed Ephemera in V&A Museum: 1992

Graphic Responses to AIDS in V&A Museum: 1996

Many of these exhibitions are built around the various faculties of the posters purpose from political propaganda to advertising entertainment, including film and cinema. While many posters retain historic interest, cultural reverence and artistic qualities, the potential of the film poster to embody these values, alongside more personal attachments between popular culture and fans is not to be underestimated. It is a

cultural marker, a piece of art, and a persistent mainstay in home décor popular amongst a variety of audiences[12]. While other examples, from travel posters to Toulouse Lautrec, represent equally valid values, film posters provide an example of how the meaning of film itself has shifted over time and how values affiliated with film fandom and identity can be attached to ephemera. They can have an inherent subjective meaning designated by the owner, their collection and display acting as a building block of the individual's identity, one which can be demonstrated through display. To date little academic focus has been given to the use of film posters or of the dynamics of their collection, and while this area is too vast to fully discuss in this thesis. An analysis of AMPs could provide a foundation for the topic to be further addressed in the future.

Collections of posters hold historic value, acting as artefacts presenting a snapshot of eras, audiences and societies the world over. They have consistently engaged audiences in their narratives and, due to the advent of the internet, are continuing to engage them in new and exciting ways through fan distribution, engagement and reappropriation (Dorottya Székely – Marketing manager Dogwoof: Personal Interview 2016). This history and cultural significance has been the basis for a number of academic papers and exhibits (Staiger 1990: American Films In Polish Posters Exhibition 2002: Stubblefield 2007: Parmelee 2009), however the argument persists as to the lack of further discussion of the topic (French 2006: Parmelee 2009). This issue is made all the more pertinent as Parmelee summarises the potential importance of the poster to academics:

[12] Here the poster has become an avantgarde vehicle to challenge traditional notions of art, e.g. Andy Warhols use of screenprinted poster to comment on commercialism in the art world.

> These artefacts of what was arguably the most powerful cultural influence of the 20th century, the movies, allow us to envision and place in a historical, aesthetic, and cultural framework the films for which they were created
>
> (2009: 181)

Film posters act as a medium which facilitates pertinent personal affiliations between said poster, mass audiences and a singular individual, more so than many other examples of marketing and, to an extent, fine art. These images, regardless of their means of distribution and creation, trigger personal memories of both films and eras, often directly and indirectly playing to themes of nostalgia, a notion seemingly important to both collecting practice (Benjamin 1969; Baudrillard 1968; Martin 1994; Pearce 1994) and film fandom, making it integral to pop culture collecting (Klinger 2006; Herbert 2017; Geraghty 2014).

The movie poster continues to act as the cornerstone of film marketing, its ability to be reshaped being a defining attribute of contemporary film promotion.[13] The global reach of the film industry and the importance of the worldwide box office has led to the need for marketing campaigns and poster materials to maintain flexibility, allowing the poster to be adapted to suit local tastes (Szekely, Personal Interview 2016). This means that the most creative commercial posters often only exist digitally, designed to target niche audiences online, with less inspired versions displayed in various 'out of home' sites with the intention of mass appeal to a mass audience. Fewer physical copies of desirable posters therefore come to exist, meaning less opportunities for collectors to obtain and consume posters as material objects. The intangibility of digital versions may be partly responsible for the growth of AMPs and

[13] This also perhaps goes some way to explain the current use of non-illustrated posters, where photo-manipulation software can be readily used and applied to make changes to poster designs to cater a wide range of audience needs.

the practices surrounding them. Their physicality becomes a point of consideration regarding the various values attached by individuals to these artefacts, something considered impossible by collectors in relation to a purely digital version. The digital age has not only altered the current position and design of the studio poster, but has reframed what the poster means to the audience. This shift and the subsequent desire for a tangible connection to film, gives rise to the AMP market making it a relevant and contemporary subject for analysis.

Film Posters in a Virtual World

The digital age has therefore compounded films ethereal nature, impacting an individual's ability to physically engage with aspects of cinema. Bjarkman (2004) and Klinger (2006) refer to VHS and DVD collectors, suggesting that gathering these objects allows the individual to create a level of permanence not found within the act of viewing itself. Since the Virtual Turn (Thomas 2007; de Groot 2009), there has been a significant increase in the amount of film and TV consumed purely digitally (Nair, A. Auerbach, G. and Skerlos, S.J. 2019) where fans once 'extensive media libraries' (Klinger 2006) are now found online, either digitally sourced and gathered by the consumer or, more likely, predetermined by the available offerings across a variety of streaming platforms[14]. The previous ownership of VHS/DVD could be linked to the theatrical showing of a film/movie, with some fans connecting VHS, regardless of its obsoleteness, with a nostalgic fondness to their viewing of the movie in a venue which similarly may no longer physically exist (Church 2015)[15]. While digital consumption of media can still evoke memories, this is less easy to fulfil without a physical marker to

[14] Some examples include amazonprime, Netflix, and Mubi, with a significant growth in streaming platforms evident in recent history.

[15] Church (2010) comments that many spaces of cinema diminished due to the rise of the multiplex and the further insurgence of digital home viewing

base emotions and motivations around, as a greater sensory attachment generates a greater feeling of connection (Krishna 2011).

In essence, the virtual world has changed how individuals connect with material culture, where ‘’contemporary consumer culture and new virtual technologies alter the roles of objects in our lives’’ (Moist and Banash 2013: xi). The result being a perceived difference in the value of the object, both literal and metaphorical, as physicality becomes its own luxury in regards to tangible products (books, writing implements, media products etc.), and the potentially disposable popular culture ephemera from the past is now highly desirable from film posters to PEZ dispensers (Moist and Banash 2013). The importance of owning and collecting these objects as a connection to a diminishing physical world and as method of preservation, has become tantamount in regards to the relationships that collectors form with these objects. As Banash (2013) suggests, the natural shelf life of an individual’s music collection, or their writing implements has changed with the advent of digital technology where these things can effectively be stored and used without depreciation/destruction. This could conceptually include film (and other media), where they are paradoxically non-existent and everlastingly present in the digital realm. Even movie posters can be stored as digital files, but these inevitably do not fulfil collectors’ desires, as digital versions are easily copied, too readily available and lack uniqueness. An inability to effectively display these pieces in any meaningful way and a lack of any kind of historic provenance all add to the issues digital versions are imbued with.

Therefore, posters in their physical form become coveted and desirable beyond their utilitarian use, the significance of tangible ephemera increasing in the digital age and further questioning their social, cultural and economic value when placed

alongside a digital counterpart (Banash 2013). Combined, this has acted as the catalyst for AMP production, where tangibility is not merely a by-product but something to be celebrated. Uninspired imagery is replaced with artistic vision and the desire for the collector to exert ownership over items they deem important is fully facilitated in the innate 'collectability' of the AMP. They represent a shift in what can be considered the 'instant collectible' (Hughes 1984), where quality encourages desirability, effectively bypassing any traditional provenance that would be expected in older examples of historic film posters. This notion in itself becomes a key interest across the thesis, determining what values are integral to the collector to denote the importance of the AMP to them. Collectors then utilise these embodied values to justify and legitimise their practice of what may be considered by many to be simply the art of collecting fancy paper.

Chapter Outline

The overall structure of the thesis can be broadly split into two sections. The next three chapters (2,3, and 4) provide a foundation to the three core elements that define an AMP namely that they are collected and collectible, they represent the products of popular culture (particularly film), and they are artistically rendered prints which focus on craft printing production methods. The two subsequent chapters (5 and 6) make further use of interview materials with collectors and gatekeepers within the AMP community to understand how AMPs represent various values, focusing on production, followed by collecting as practice. Essentially the first half provides the context as to what the AMP represents, providing the basis for a worthwhile analysis of the AMP and its values to the collector.

The following chapter outlines the key theoretical perspectives surrounding collecting practice, providing a foundation as to how and why values might be attributed to collecting and how this action impacts the individual. Utilising materials from Museum Studies to add further support the narrative of collecting activity, the pursuit of objects to obtain various forms of fulfilment is fundamentally embedded in practice. Here, electing what is to be collected evokes further satisfaction to the individual leading to the need to address this subject across the following chapter. Chapter 3 focuses on popular culture, particularly film, highlighting the importance of the subject to the fan collector (an underdiscussed area in its own right), initiating the basis of rationale for a collector of AMPs against their relationship with cinema. This initially relates to identity, not just as a collector but as a pop culture collector, representing a desire to engage with objects symbolic of this interest, particularly those which instigate nostalgia. Two short case studies also emphasise the concept of the modern 'Instant Collectible', a previously dismissed area of collecting due to an apparent lack of provenance/quality. However, these examples from popular culture collecting have seemingly resolved this issue through enhancing production values, exploiting limited edition merchandising, and targeting a passionate demographic of fans to generate a healthy marketplace. Notions of quality as part of production are integrated into Chapter 4, as the history and cultural relevance of the poster as a communicative device, and subsequent collectible, is outlined.

As little has previously been addressed in this field, a relatively thorough review of the poster itself is necessary to demonstrate their inherent credibility and value, historically, societally and culturally speaking. Content surrounding film poster production, its utilitarian usage, and the collecting practice surrounding it, will offer

context as to the similarities and parallels which differentiate the film poster from the AMP. Finally, printing methods which are integral to the AMPs success in the eyes of the collector are introduced and further contextualised against interview content from gatekeepers in the AMP community. The embedded value assigned to art and craft production integrated into AMP production potentially offsets criticism as to why one would demonstrate a keen interest in AMPs. This contextualises a significant element of the field of play, where printing practice meets culture, meets art, meets collecting. The nuances associated with each element are integral in understanding the strategy adopted by AMP collectors.

The concept of credibility being assigned through production provides the basis for discussion in Chapter 5 as the tone of the thesis moves from more empirical to conceptual analysis, utilising the work of Pierre Bourdieu to academically underpin the discussion. Following on from the previous chapters, the thesis offers a review of how AMPs are purposefully created to be desirable to the collecting community, integrating the collector's interest in cinema with enhanced production practices, providing the AMP with a form of 'Immediate provenance', a term of note towards the end of the chapter.

Chapter 6 leads directly on to focus on how collectors assign values against their pursuit of AMPs and by doing so, legitimise their practice of collecting. Juxtaposed against the previous chapter, Chapter 6 moves away from how AMPs are produced to embellish value and into how collectors determine, interpret and utilise such values. While this can be connected with the expectations laid out in the first section of the thesis, the inherent desire to physically possess an element of film

ephemera and the personal gratification akin to self-fulfilment rarely recognised to such an extent in collecting studies are distinct findings of this study, raising the issue as to how to address these phenomena in a modern collectible marketplace.

Methodology

This thesis originated from my own involvement in collecting AMPs and given that collecting studies has a history of defining such practice as somewhat irrational (Belk 1988; Stewart 1993) it was the impetus of this study to investigate why collectors (including myself) commit to AMP collecting. In the first instance it is necessary to deconstruct the AMP into the three aforementioned areas that it comprises of, collecting, film as subject, and relationship with art/craft. While this effectively aids the narrative structure, it also provides methodological parameters within which research motivations can be positioned. Overall, a research approach which seeks to develop an understanding of the personal attachment's individuals have AMPs is necessary in achieving a deep and meaningful response to action which can be somewhat difficult to articulate. As such, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both collectors and gatekeepers to provide sufficient content as to support the overall research aim as to how values are assigned to AMPs and why.

Interviews

This thesis aims to offer depth as to why AMP collectors commit to practice, resulting in the need to interview relevant individuals to gain valuable insight into said practice. Here, a 'qualitatively orientated in-depth interviewing model' was adopted allowing for 'greater flexibility' than other data collection methods (Minichiello et al 2000). Though a netnographic approach (Kozinets 2009) was considered due to the

significant amount of information available online via forums and social media groups, these contributions, while interesting and useful, are often brief and non-specific. Similarly, surveys could have been used to provide data but respondents would likely prove reluctant to discuss motivations in detail, particularly problematic when debating a potentially irrational practice in which interviewees may need further contextual information to understand the line of questioning or to introspectively review their actions (Minichiello et al 2000). Therefore, interviewing provides a logic where specific topics can be discussed at length based on an initially broad field of practice, but allowing flexibility to elaborate upon subjective values specifically assigned to AMP collecting where needed (Grbich 2013; Flick 2015).

Overall, twelve interviews with collectors, lasting around one hour, took place via telephone or a similar online tool (i.e. Skype), and were recorded with consent using an audio recording device. Six further interviews were conducted in the same fashion with gatekeepers working in the AMP industry or adjacent fields (Minichiello et al 2000). While gatekeepers definitively provide an 'expert' perspective (Bogner et al 2009), so too do interviewees, whose significant knowledge of AMPs gives authority to their responses (Flick 2015). Once collected, responses could be reviewed and categorised accordingly.

As collectors discussed a number of personal dynamics (finances, family and lifestyle) and as identifying them by name is not needed in order to establish understanding in their comments, it was the right choice to grant anonymity as to avoid any connection between semi-private discussions and the collector (Saunders et al 2014). While there are very few comments that fit this category, in the interests of consistency it was necessary to maintain this confidentiality and the use of such practice does not disrupt the validity of the research (Saunders et al 2014). A number

of gatekeepers within the community were interviewed and their names have not been anonymised. In the main instance this is based on their role within the field and the need to connect the interviewee to their position of authority. Also, as they discuss public business operations as opposed to personal information, there is less of a need to anonymise these contributors.

Analysis

Thematic discourse analysis of interview data leads to the adoption of both an interpretivist and positivist position[16], in that it requires the logical categorisation of qualitive responses to be contextually addressed together (Botelle and Wilson 2020). Thematic analysis of interview content was used to syphon the large amount of evidence gathered (Botelle and Wilson 2020), using a coding system (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell and Alexander 2000; Grbich 2013). Group areas were given three descending headings, Macro, Micro and Minimus, the latter category housing the actual responses based on specific topics discussed. Macro referred to the initial 'mother' subjects under scrutiny in the following three chapters of the thesis, namely collecting, popular culture (film) and posters (art and craft). Micro, deconstructs this further into specific bridging topics between the wider fields and the specific responses. For example, in the Macro collecting category, the micro areas include topics related to the 'Artefact' itself and the 'Act of Collecting' as practice. Minimus categories reflect the nuances of discussion, each response individually coded, leading to a combination of thematic coding based on initial understanding of the field, and *In Vivo* coding as interviewees presented common comments intrinsic to practice

[16] See Lin (2005) 'Bridging Positivist and Interpretivist Approached to Qualitative Methods', for more information.

but outside of expectations (Flick 2015). A Micro category such as ‘Artefact’ would link to threads such as ‘Archival’ processes and the allure of ‘Exclusivity’, two topics intrinsic to the AMP collector and their actions. The overall structure is included below (Table 1) and many of these group titles are used as subheadings within later chapters. This connects data and analysis, and facilitated the retrieval of content to be organised and interpreted through discourse analysis (see Willig 2014), identifying the meaning of actions within the verbal responses from collectors (Botelle and Willot 2020).

Bourdieu and the AMP

To support discourse analysis, the work of Pierre Bourdieu, predominantly his ‘Thinking Tools’ developed over his lifetime, will be utilised to aid interpretation of the potential values assigned to topics discussed (Waquant 1993; Grenfell 2014). While criticism of Bourdieu’s work, including his ‘Thinking Tools’, naturally exists, (likely in the work of any prominent theorist), the use of his principles throughout this thesis act as a facilitator for analysis and not as determining the outcome of said analysis. This means his work provides the lexicon and structure to anchor discussion, aiding the deconstruction of the production and collection of AMPs at a point where there is currently no existing analysis of the field. This thesis does not inherently agree or disagree with Bourdieu (this thesis is not interested in presenting another critique of his work), rather utilising his Thinking Tools in the same objective manner as the man himself to initially deconstruct the community and the collecting practice/s associated with it. That said, it is useful to point out some of those criticisms to better understand existing perspectives which surround his work while noting that such issues will unlikely affect the analysis of the work presented here.

One of the more vocal critics of Bourdieu, Jacques Rancière, unpicks his work across various texts/publications (1987, 2004), where Watts comments that "Rancière's attacks on Bourdieu have been scathing" (2014: 110). Rancière's issues with Bourdiue's discourse seemingly stem from his imposed position of sociological superiority based on his perceptions of the class system and the characteristics which he automatically determines the individual inherits. This highlights the issue that Bourdieu naturally positions the lower classes as failing to have the necessary inherent ability to 'read' high culture, a fair point of contention with Rancière amongst others.

This area of criticism bears some relevance to this study when considered alongside his arguably antiquated notions of 'high versus low culture' being bound to those hierarchical structures he instinctively associates with class (Prior 2005, Speller 2011, Mahbub and Shoiley 2016). Ultimately, Bourdieu believes that only those with embodied cultural capital, often the result of an upper-class upbringing, can appreciate and understand 'high culture' e.g. fine art[17]. Mander (1987) also notes that Bourdieu has a restrictive view of 'culture', fundamentally determined through more traditional opinions of what constitutes high/low culture in itself, beyond his interest in class systems (i.e. Bourdieu believes that fine art is, by its virtue, high culture). While this does make sense to some degree, it is the natural dismissal of 'low brow' without further consideration of the historical impact of such content, or the provenance it adopts over time. Take the example of Jaws outlined in the case study presented in this thesis, where Hunter and Melia (2020) comment that it is only now that Jaws has earned its cultural reverence within cinema history in the view of critics, audience and academics alike.

[17] Embodied cultural capital in Bourdieu's terms is the result of upbringing, education etc. all elements of what he then terms the individual's 'habitus', a concept reflected upon in later chapters. The blurring of social boundaries and cultural appreciation possible limits 'embodied cultural capital' as a conceptual notion in modern practice.

However, given much of the cinema content which provides the subject matter of a significant number of popular AMPs is considered low brow (Butsch 2000, Plainse 2019), the artistic integrity and craft production embodied in AMPs has the potential to bridge this cultural divide (Mahbub and Shoily 2016). Scott (2008) comments of Bourdieu's work that:

> What he fails to note is that the same process that created an elite culture nearly impenetrable from below also encourages the elaboration of a subordinate culture that is opaque to those above it. In fact, it is precisely such a pattern of dense social interaction among subordinates and very restricted, formal contact with superiors fosters the growth of distinctive subcultures and the diverging dialects that accompany them.
>
> (2008: 133)

While this mirrors much of the motivation of the AMP community to champion art and craft celebrating cinema, the community is still victim to the need to maintain some elements of traditional highbrow characteristics to seek and obtain the same cultural capital value Bourdieu would attach to such things.

There is an argument to suggest a new line of critique is needed highlighting a movement towards the overlapping elements of low and high culture and/or the emerging area of 'nobrow' culture (see Swirski and Vanhanen 2017) relative to Bourdieu. While this is not the place for this discussion and re-evaluation of Bourdieu's legacy, the topic is still relevant and reintroduced in more detail in Chapter 5.

Butler (1999) openly critiques the construct of Habitus in that Bourdieu's description of it remains relatively vague, and often utilised by Bourdieu for his own analytical benefit. However, given the complexity of social interactivity, this is to be expected as it is a mechanic to aid analysis, not an infallible construct to understand

every nuance of the individual in the context of their field. Conceptually, Habitus is useful in this thesis to allow the discussion presented to focus on the collector (naturally a necessary aspect of the analysis presented) but not without Bourdieu's (and other relevant users of Bourdieu's) flexibility.

Sarah Thornton's seminal text, Club Cultures (1995) introduces 'Subcultural Capital', challenging the limited scope of Bourdieu's concept of Cultural Capital. This critique and advancement of Bourdieu's principles, moves towards addressing the above issues spanning low and high brow culture, and ultimately the value of subculture and the practice-based hierarchies which permeate them. Thornton determines that much of the work prior to 'Club Cultures', views popular culture engagement as a horizontal series of interactions, where there is a definitive vertical hierarchy embedded within traditions of high culture (8-10:1996). Thornton argues against this, determining that subcultural practice is parallel to similar notions of hierarchy and engagement reframed in the context of their own community activity.

These breaks in the conventions of capital demonstrate distinctions (a term favoured by Bourdieu) within high, mainstream and alternative fields of popular culture, where not all popular culture is considered low (or nobrow) culture. While AMPs are really only semantically 'alternative', they do still illustrate a case study that shares parallels to that of Thornton's own interests in 'the Club Scene', where AMPs act as antithesis to commercial studio publicity materials with few notable exceptions.

Though Thornton's work will be further addressed later in the thesis, this is an apt opportunity to introduce several key threads of her research relative to AMP production/consumption. Authenticity is important to Thornton, whose main interests focus on the 'authenticness' of subcultural (or as is synonymous in her book

'underground') practices compared to 'mainstream' activities. Ultimately this is determined through highlighting and spotlighting elements of distinction, and subcultures use their own methods of 'distinction' to navigate this dichotomy, demonstrating their taste culture through considerations such as specific language, fashion, media consumption etc. all of which further denote 'insider knowledge' thus indicating the individuals 'subcultural capital'[18]. This type of engagement/practice is very much a part of AMP collecting, yet certain elements that would demonstrate such 'distinctions' are often based on traditionally accepted notions of high culture (art and craft), yet in celebration of cinema which is, at points, firmly affixed to low culture, at least in Bourdieu's world. Authenticity through distinction across AMPs comes from a mix of the two, the right kind of subject crafted in the right kind of way, the expectations and limitations of which are reflected upon across this work.

Of further interest is how Thornton addresses subcultural capital against other capital forms, a similar point of interest as is presented in the later chapter in this thesis. Where she notes and agrees that cultural capital is often ultimately defined by its 'convertibility' to economic capital[19], subcultural capital does not convert 'with the same ease' (Thornton 1995 12). Thornton does note that this is still very much possible, as individuals generate income from their 'hipness', commenting on professions such as DJing, music journalist and clothes designer culminating in her stating that:

> These professions often enjoy a lot of respect not only because of their high volume of subcultural capital, but also from their role in defining and creating it (1995: 12)

[18] Potential fixed capital will be reintroduced in Chapter 6 of the thesis
[19] Thornton notes Garnham and Williams 1986 Pierre Bourdieu and the Sociology of Culture

This is evident in the various interactions across the AMP community, from producers and distributors to the key collectors who openly demonstrate subcultural capital in their comments across social media and in their immediate, knowledgeable and often respected (yet subjective) answers to questions posed by newer members of said community through such platforms. However, Thornton's concept is conflicted within AMPs as their inherent and celebrated tangibility, alongside the nuances of production which will be detailed later, mean that they naturally generate an economic capital value. Though the subcultural capital embodied by members may help initiate sales of items housed within their collections on the 'aftermarket', and their influence can instigate purchase decisions via their public comments regarding upcoming releases[20], there still belies the physical poster, and ultimately it is this that the community (and by and large this thesis) is interested in.

While there are many clear useful applications of Thornton's work surrounding subcultural capital to this thesis, most namely her demonstration that Bourdieu's notions of capital can be questioned and expanded upon, a further dichotomy exists in relation to AMP collectors and their motivation to practice which begins to contradict elements of these aforementioned theoretical notions. It is evident across the community and throughout interviews conducted that AMPs provide a bridge between more traditional notions of Bourdieusian cultural capital (even if this is non conscious) as production and practice is ultimately governed by values attributed to art and craft, making AMPs an interesting area to consider Bourdieu's work against as they are by no means purely subcultural in the eyes of collectors, and to think of them as such would be, in these same eyes, doing them a disservice.

[20] A respected member of the community championing a new AMP release may lead to an increase in it's popularity at point of sale and beyond.

Bourdieu's main thinking tools, namely Habitus, Field, Practice and Capital, intertwine to produce a picture of the individual and their action within a given sociological situation and/or environment. Practice ultimately refers to action within the field, where the field itself is: "the objective network or configuration of relations to be found in any social space or particular context" (Grenfell 2012: 47). Habitus acts as the 'subjective element of practice' (2012: 47), directing the way in which an agent operates within the field. While this is often unconscious and reflective of one's upbringing, education and role within society, it is interwoven with more conscious representations of identity to evoke one's desired position. Jones, Higgs and Ekerdt (2009) expand on this, commenting that habitus in developed society has become informed by consumption, and consumption can be conducted to express identity, freedom of choice being related to self-expression (2009: 30)[21]. This thesis adopts this perspective in discussing the context of habitus against the consumption activity surrounding collecting practice.

Capital acts broadly as the currency through which: "assets of different kinds are transformed and exchanged within complex networks or circuits within and across different fields" (Moore 2012: 98). While economic capital is widely understood, Bourdieu attempts to shift capital affiliations into other realms relevant to societal interactions, predominantly including (and most relevant to this thesis) Cultural and Social Capital. Here, the cultural capital of the individual represents knowledge, taste and cultural preferences, while social capital revolves around affiliates and networks, alongside friends and family (Fowler 1997; Moore 2012; Thomson 2012; Huang 2019).

[21] Though Jones et al (2012) agree that 'individuals are aware of identity but do not create it' as it is inherent, lifestyle choices can undermine this where "identity presumes community, lifestyle and individuality" (2012: 31) meaning identity can be reshaped through consumption linked to lifestyle choices.

Capital is particularly relevant to this thesis in addressing and rationalising the inherent values linked to AMP collecting, drawing links between actions and an inherent desire for capital accumulation. Finally, while Bourdieu has been utilised to discuss social engagement in art and craft, often relative to taste (Cook 2000; Grenfell 2012; Quinn et al 2018) and discussions surrounding the subcultural associations with film fandom (Hills 2002; Herbert 2017), any previous use of his Thinking Tools alongside collecting is rare and brief[22], representing an opportunity to explore this topic further against Bourdieu's relatable principles. Though this outline is very brief, these terms will be discussed in further contextual depth across the thesis.

[22] See Chapter 2

MACRO	MICRO	MINIMUS
Collecting	Artefact	Archival/cataloguing, protection and framing
		Prestige of ownership relevant to exclusivity and scarcity
	Economics	Aftermarket and Speculation
		Reselling as process
	Act of Collecting	Narrative of collecting
		Influence on home, life and finances
		Adoration and thrill of acquisition
		Identify as collector
	Community	Community interaction
		Entering the community
		Private commissions
		Trading in the community
		Online/community transactions
Popular Culture	Lifestyle and Film	Property and fandom influences collection
		Single property influences collection
		Memories, personal associations and family
		Further links to pop culture interests
		Employed within field
	Film Posters	Nuances of AMPs
		Artistic interpretation
		Opposition to studio marketing
		Displaying art and impact on others
Art/Prints	Production	Works in field
		Importance and value of printing
		Artist influences collecting
		Printing method influences collecting
	Content	Aftermarket influenced by artist
		Specific art influences collecting
		Art influences collecting
	Digital	Rejection of digital
		Difference between digital image and reality

Table 1

In conducting this variety of research there is always a potentially inherent subjectivity at play in the interpretation of responses and following analysis (Drapeau 2002; Dowling 2005), particularly of note given my existing link to the field. However, this has not swayed my critical judgment and has not only granted access to interviewees but supplies a useful prior knowledge of the community and practices (Minichiello et al 2000), utilising what Flick (2015) refers to as tacit assumptions of critical rationalism, or the normative paradigm, in which:

> The researchers ‘know’ the participants life world sufficiently to formulate a hypothesis for testing their theoretical assumptions in a way that covers the aspects in the real world which are relevant to the test
>
> (2015: 23)

Through utilising Bourdieu as grounding for the ‘real world’ basis of analysis, and initiating research as an AMP collector, I possess experience in the field to aid and facilitate investigation. For example, interviewee comments often contain certain linguistic conventions common to the field, which can be quickly interpreted during and after discussions have taken place. Someone external to the community may misunderstand the meaning or value attributed to such a comment, for example; the difference between Screenprint and Giclee, the term ISO (in search of), what the ‘Mondo’ brand represents and who the Elite 10/E10 are). Throughout the research process and any subsequent analysis, Wilson’s ‘Interpretive Paradigm’ is applied alongside methodical discussion. While rules and systems are in place across interactions (again making Bourdieu’s work a useful anchor), every agent in the field acts subjectively, where: “meanings are produced and exchanged in interpretative processes and that research has to begin with analysing the concepts produced and used in these processes” (Flick 2015: 24). Importantly, this supports the need to address the field itself in which AMP collectors operate, giving reason to the discussion across Chapter’s 2,3 and 4.

While Bourdieu has been utilised across the thesis to ground the analysis of the AMP community and the practice of AMP collecting, there has been consideration of other potential routes/perspectives to adopt. At its core, the research question asks as to the motivation of collectors and as such, behavioural psychology offers a

potentially fruitful area to add context to the analysis. Methods surrounding behavioural psychology typically offer the benefit of being able to measure the actions and reactions of a subject to aid rigour and ability to repeat studies (e.g. conditioning and/or reinforcement) (Cherry 2020). Theories, such as Hull's Drive Reduction Theory (see Mowrer and Soloman 1954), could be utilised in an attempt to interpret the motivation of the collector to gather and protect items (in this case AMPs), and the constant need to continue collecting (matched by the satisfaction of successfully purchasing an AMP) would be relatable to Thorndike's, Law of Effect (Thorndike 1927).

Linked to this area of study, the work of Lev Vygotsky, particularly his concepts such as the 'More Knowledgeable Other' and his works surrounding Sociocultural Theory, offer points of interest which could naturally map to collecting activity and the community surrounding it. Vygotsky's work (along with the likes of his contemporaries such as Jean Piaget) also focuses on childhood development (Bruner 1997), and given that most collecting activity is embedded in childhood development (Burk 1900; Baudrillard 1968, Danet & Katriel 1989; Baekeland in Pearce 1994; Pearce 1994; Macdonald 2010; Lafferty et al 2013), it could be of interest to review this conceptually. That said, this area (i.e. childhood collecting linked to AMP collecting in adulthood) is not the immediately relevant to this thesis and would be better served in an another, more focused study. As a collector himself, even Sigmund Freud's work could be brought in parallel with collecting practice, yet this remains a difficult marriage further hindered by the criticism his work has faced (Crews 1996; Spencer 2020).

There is also potential for other postmodern sociologists perspectives to be discussed alongside AMP collecting practice. Much of Foucault's work concentrated on notions of rationality, which could be aligned to the often-irrational desire to collect,

where many collectors find it difficult to articulate their motivation (Olssen 2016). This ultimately becomes a significant theme within this thesis yet Bourdieu's concept of capital accumulation becomes more directly useful in explaining the collector's reason to commit to practice. Similarly, Foucault's consistent interest around social interactivity and the inevitable power struggles which entail could be mapped to the AMP community, yet this is not the direct goal of the work presented here and would likely lead to further tangents in the investigation. Relatable again is Stuart Hall's pioneering work in the field of Cultural Studies and Visual Culture. His interest in audiences engagement in the media and the varying cultural representations based on cultural consumption (amongst other influential elements) fit several of the themes of this thesis including the nature of collectors to somewhat craft their identity around their practice (Hall and Evans 2005; Henriques, Morley and Goblot 2017). His often-cited Reception Theory, could be integrated into AMP production and the subsequent decoding of these nuanced production elements by the collector, yet this may have yielded little depth given the intense production and business practice associated with creating AMPs. Hall's contemporary, Raymond Williams, also offers notions which reflect the research themes of this thesis. Similar to Bourdieu, Williams' interest in the relationship between class and culture is consistent across his work (Seidl, Horak and Grossberg 2020), however the focus on *audience* as opposed to *object* further distances these concepts from the research interests presented here[23].

While brief, this section demonstrates that multiple approaches could have been taken in initiating this study. However, a merging of such concepts would likely cloud the inspection of this phenomenon in a thesis which, in part, is investigating the

[23] This is not to suggest that Bourdieu does not focus upon similar relationships, however, as will be mentioned in the following paragraph, his work has been used for other means in this thesis.

AMP community for the first time. Inevitably this becomes less about why this thesis could utilise other theoretical perspectives and more about why Bourdieu's work is appropriate to the analysis presented here. While more detail will be presented across the thesis, the evident conflict between high and low culture bound to AMPs naturally mirrors Bourdieu's ideas and his notion of capital exchange is easily mapped to the practices surrounding AMP collecting and the value the collector perceives in their activity. Both factors in combination move the discussion presented here closer to resolving the research question at the heart of this thesis, why do AMP collectors collect? His established framework, terminological lexicon and various perspectives can be placed in parallel to that of the AMP community and its varying interconnected interactions, meaning that while other theorists and their work could have been utilised, they are none more (or less) suited than Pierre Bourdieu.

The methods employed to gather and interpret data are rational and rigorous, fundamentally providing primary information regarding a topic which has broadly been lacking address, and specifically (in regards to the AMP) garnered no previous attention. It is important to discuss these topics against our modern environment faced with an everchanging digital landscape, where the values assigned to tangible instant collectibles can be interpreted against a multitude of potential broader readings, i.e. the need to exert physical control over one's identity, and the physicality of film in a virtual world. To a lesser, yet more specific extent, the results provide the opportunity for reflection on what is a growing interest in AMPs and their role within the collectors practice, potentially reflective of the wider influence they may adopt in the future when compared with current studio film poster production. The importance of the relationship between mainstream film posters and AMPs can be somewhat summarised in AMP distributor Brock Higgins' comment below:

> The studios don't get it unfortunately. One of the VPs at MGM has told me that he has put up a couple [AMPs] in his office. I asked, 'did you have other movie posters up before?' He said, 'no', and it's like, don't you see what that means?
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

Amplifying the AMP: Case Study – Introduction

It's a beautiful day, the beaches are open and people are having a wonderful time

At this early point in the thesis it is sensible to illuminate the AMP, its construction, production and elements of nuance in relation to the wider framework of film posters, the market in which AMPs sit and the overall relevance they hold for collectors. These individuals, when questioned, often identify themselves as both collectors and film fans (evidenced in the interview data collected as part of this study), meaning subject matter is similarly instrumental to their practice. Though many attributes pertaining to AMP production and collection will subsequently be introduced across relevant points of the work to follow, this case study seeks to introduce them as an artefact of interest. It is not to exhaustively demonstrate all of the unique aspects of each individual AMP as this would become an endless pursuit given the sheer volume in existence. This does however, assist the navigation of a number of the key elements relative to collector practice and the initial placement of various values on the AMP by the individual, the producer/s, the distributor and the community at large.

On this, Bourdieu's previously mentioned 'Thinking Tools' will be instrumental in later chapters regarding said navigation and interpretation of practice (Grenfell 2014, Ingram, Abrahams, Thatcher, Burke 2015). While these later chapter will delve into the interconnectivity of these principles in parallel to AMPs, this case study further

offers the limited opportunity to demonstrate the immediate links between Bourdieusian constructs, most prominently capital (economic, social, cultural and, to a lesser extent, subcultural) to then be reintroduced throughout the subsequent discussions, essentially signposting a number of these concepts for the reader in preparation.

AMPs produced representing the 1975 film *Jaws* (dir. Steven Spielberg) offer a fair and interesting point of deconstruction for several reasons. The film's general popularity and cultural position internally and externally to the AMP community make it a point of reference that many individuals will have some form of existing knowledge around. Beyond this a significant number of 'desirable'[24] AMPs have been produced for the movie, with possibly more officially produced Jaws AMPs than any other film property[25]. Furthermore, given the iconicity of Roger Kastel's original painted poster for the film's release[26], it offers a further point of interest in the ability to build a discussion as to AMP attributes and values around, demonstrating their separation from what has previously been referred to as 'studio marketing materials'. In essence, what makes an AMP different from standard publicity posters, using arguably one of the most recognisable film posters as a point of origin.

Kastel's Jaws image (oil paint on canvas) started life as a book cover illustration created in 1974 for Peter Benchley's pulp novel published by Bantam. Just over a year later six million copies had been sold, the artwork often given some recognition in this

[24] Many with a significant economic value on the aftermarket, but furthermore this volume indicates that multiple AMPs can be produced for the same film yet they remain distinct enough (and embody values desirable to collectors) to continue to generate collector interest.

[25] This is naturally difficult to determine given the sheer volume of AMPs in existence and the vast number of movies ultimately represented. Similar popular properties include Blade Runner, Alien, Robocop and the Star Wars franchise, to name but a few. Their popular cinematic status similarly making AMP representations interesting to collectors who naturally identify as 'film fans'.

[26] The Daily Jaws website cites this as being the "first time a poster image became a merchandising product in its own right" (https://thedailyjaws.com/campaigns/findjaws)

success. The original painting has since vanished after touring bookstores around the United States, Kastel noting that he saw it for the last time in an exhibition of illustration in the American Museum of Natural History (Tucker 2015). The legacy of the poster (and naturally the film itself) has been retained in public and cultural consciousness, claiming Empire Magazine's top position in a poll of *The 50 Greatest Movie Posters Ever*, where the authors claim it to be 'the most iconic poster of all time' (Nugent and Dyer 2018). This cultural ubiquity of the original poster image and the reverence towards it, naturally transcends into the AMP community. Here, memorable art which distils the film's narrative to a single, impactful image (Wyatt 2010) somewhat conceptually drives all AMP production but within a community where members often warmly meet new print releases reimaging said narrative depictions.

Jaws and the AMP

As a film property Jaws is a recognised and revered relatively universally, across demographics, from critics to fans to the novice film watcher (Hunter and Melia 2020). The high concept, original summer blockbuster opened to saturated cinema seat booking following a revolutionary marketing campaign, and subsequently grossed $480 million in worldwide box office revenue (Wasser 2010, Wyatt 2010, Hunter and Melia 2020)[27]. It continues to be recognised as a staple of cinematic history, its popularity yet to wane in the decades since its release, Hunter and Melia noting that "Jaws has now achieved classic status" and that "the critical standing of Jaws in particular is now higher than ever" (2000; eBook). There is agreement from film critic

[27] Sheldon Hall notes that while Jaws may have not been the first film to take advantages of these individual mechanisms, it may rightly be determined as the first to use them synchronously to great advantage, setting the standard of summer releases and spectacle cinema to follow (Hall 2020).

Mark Kermode, who similarly summarises in his 40th anniversary Guardian article regarding release of the film that:

> To this day, many consider the template of contemporary blockbuster releases to have been laid down in the summer of 1975 by a movie that redefined the parameters of a "hit" – artistically, demographically, financially
>
> (Kermode 2015)

As such, Jaws has earned its status in film history and, as a subject matter for AMPs, is met similarly positively by much of the film loving AMP community. Aside from its own aforementioned iconic poster materials, the film offers a range of visual inspiration, the artistic values attributed by Kermode to the production, lending itself to the artistic renditions bound to the many Jaws AMPs. This is further supported in another comment provided by Hunter and Melia, in that Jaws now represents "a precision engineered masterpiece of classic filmmaking, whose deep focus compositions, painstakingly blocked long takes, subtly controlled palette and sensational editing have only started to be fully acknowledged and studies". While the 'spectacle' of Jaws has been evident since the film's release, this added recognition and articulation of its accomplished aesthetic has naturally influenced many artists within the AMP community to provide their interpretation of the source, with engaged collectors consistently meeting these new pieces with the enthusiasm that Hunter and Melia have also assigned to the property.

For context, a small selection of AMP examples representing Jaws, have been included below. To reinforce the relevance of Jaws to the AMP community, several new releases have even occurred in the last few weeks before the submission of this thesis. The examples included represent a time span of 2013 to 2021, and while not

exhaustive, each of these examples manifest the established criteria expected of AMP production by the collecting community. These include an image distilled via artistic rendering, and each has been produced as a limited edition, screenprinted poster. While noting these examples, the original sales price for each varies from $45 to $80, with the exception of the screenprinted rerelease of the Kastel image originally priced at £150. This example is of particular interest and will be discussed in more detail shortly.

All of these examples, along with many of the others not presented here, have ultimately seen an increase in price when bought and sold on the aftermarket. This is instrumental to the popularity and allure of AMP collecting, where many AMPs will increase in economic value, within days of them being introduced to the market. As limited-edition prints, they have been known to 'sell out' within seconds of release, with AMPs representing Jaws naturally being popular products to purchase where demand often outstrips supply. Motivations are consistently high within the community towards this film property, with collectors willing to pay a significant amount for such AMPs noting the value of economic capital placed on collecting practice. As an example, Kevin Wilson's 'Amity Island' from 2015, originally priced at around $60, sold most recently in 2019 for $350. This is an edition of 100, neither paltry or huge in AMP terms but still representing a significant rise in value.

To the collector, this is indicative of several concepts, all of which will be reintroduced later in the thesis. In the first instance ownership of AMPs can be seen as an investment, the price and resale figures instrumental in justifying practice and often followed by collectors with fervour. Secondly, the increase in economic value can be indicative of the overall value placed on the print within the community. To the collector who positions themselves firmly as a 'film fan', where an iconic property such

as Jaws may hold a significance within their personal history, paying a large sum to then own a desirable print for said film, is rational to them as it reinforces an element of this fandom. Inevitably they tangibly own something which demarcates their perceived connection to an important film, which they can reflect on internally (through knowledge of ownership) and externally, through sharing ownership by either framing the print and hanging it on the walls of their home, or through sharing comments and images (photographs) across social media platforms to evidence ownership. The manner in which the individual demonstrates ownership is to effectively demonstrate their own capital, predominantly cultural and economic, impacted exponentially if the AMP is revered and in high demand. Naturally this is a subject of much interest and will be reintroduced in later chapters.

Furthermore, multiple desirable AMPs being produced for the same film property demonstrates that the production values assigned to AMPs allow them to both differentiate themselves from one another, and more broadly from studio marketing materials, as emphasis is placed on art and artistic integrity by the community. While they may all represent Jaws, each version is seen as a completely different artefact in the eyes of collectors based on rendering, with some examples naturally appealing to individuals within the community more than others providing a point of distinction to again rationalise collecting activity i.e. which AMPs to add to the collection and which to not. In the tradition of art appreciation holding an inherent subjectivity, notions surrounding aforementioned economic capital can often be seen to also sway ones ‘liking’ of an AMP, but it is often verbalised by the collector that their motivation is to collect art which they determine to be visually appealing (even if that happens to be financially appealing too).

With this in mind, Bourdieusian principles further represent an opportune perspective for analysis through determining elements of capital interplay, especially economic and cultural, which influence such decision-making practices. This is made more relevant when framed alongside the cultural capital bound to the films popularity, in this instance Jaws, but reflected across AMPs for many over film properties. Moving from Summer Blockbuster 'popcorn entertainment' (Pirrello 2020) to cinema classic (Kermode 2015), Jaws is garnered with a resolute injection of cultural significance assigned by stakeholder. The relationship between high and low culture as seen in this example, make Bourdieu's own interest in such subjects initially relatable to the study of AMPs. However, where both audiences and cultural artefacts change over time to adopt new cultural positions (i.e. Jaws), and where Bourdieu's work may be considered in need of revision based on this concept (Prior 2005), AMPs often straddle contemporary and traditional notions of culture through their subject matter and production values respectively. This determines that Bourdieu cannot be discounted, but rather utilised in different ways and with added restriction, as will be employed throughout this thesis. On this, Prior notes:

> Whilst Bourdieu's arguments still retain a good degree of explanatory value – taken together habitus, capital and field still provide the most comprehensive set of instruments available to understand the fate of modern art fields – we need to find satisfactory ways of updating and warping his ideas to account for inflections in the cultural landscape
>
> (2005: 125)

Cultural categories have become 'blurred' yet this is why Bourdieu's lexicon and basic principles bound within his Thinking Tools are integral to this thesis, where AMPs

represent the products of popular culture (themselves operating within a cultural grey area) with artistic production values more commonly akin to high culture.

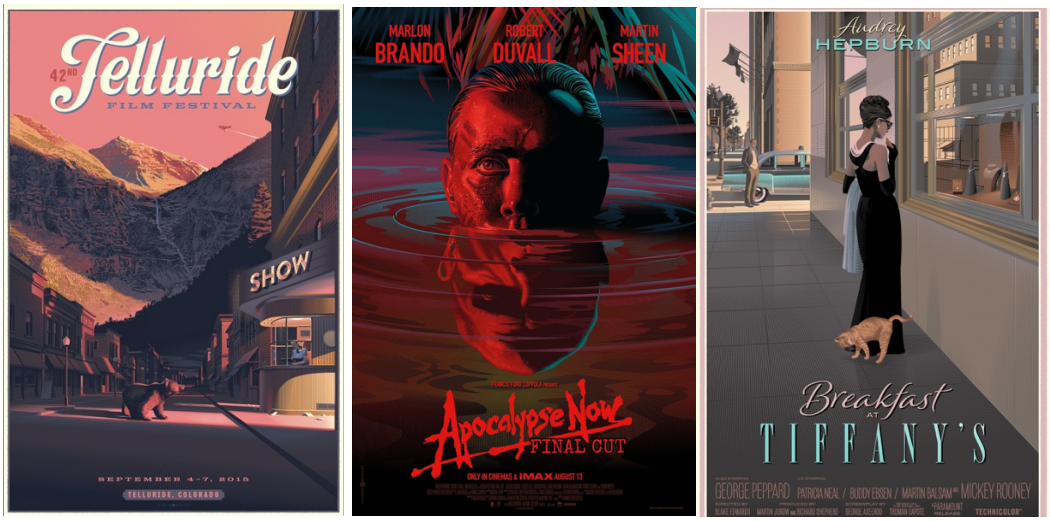
Artist Spotlight: Laurent Durieux and the 'Spielberg Effect'

As part of the research surrounding this thesis Jack Durieux, co-founder of Nautilus Art Prints offered an illuminating account of the 'business' of AMP production, distribution and collecting, the content of which will populate later chapters. However, his co-founder twin brother, Laurent Durieux, represents a useful case study as his popularity as an AMP artist has continued to grow within the community (and subsequently beyond) since his first screenprinted movie posters were released in 2012. Most notable of these early prints were his renditions for the popular *Universal Monsters* series, distributed by MondoTees. His work is made further relevant given that he is responsible for one of the most recognised and revered Jaws AMPs in the community.

Living and working in Belgium, Laurent Durieux has been a professional graphic designer, illustrator and teacher for nearly three decades. In 2011 Durieux was named in the prestigious advertising industry focused magazine, *Lurzer's Archive*, as one of the top 200 'Best Illustrators' in the world, the same year he won a gold Hugo Award nomination for his animated short *Hellville*[28] (dir. Busson, Drevon, Duhayon, Durieux, Mege-Ythier, Pichon, Soler, Tillie, Wang 2011) (Marks 2013, Neo 2014). This provided the springboard to his subsequent growth to become a significant figure in the AMP community. Laurent's AMPs are housed in several reverent archives including the 'Oscar Museum' in Los Angeles and the 'Cinémathèque Française' in Paris (Crites 2020). They have also been consistently nominated (and have won)

[28] Naturally Laurent designed the film's key art and poster.

prestigious acoolades, including the aforementioned ‘Clio Awards’, winning Bronze in 2018 for his AMP for *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* (dir. Blake Edwards 1961), Silver in 2019 for his official key art for the *Apocalypse Now* (dir Francis Ford Coppola 1979) Redux ‘Final Cut’ Rerelease, and Gold in 2016 for his poster advertising the Telluride Film Festival (clios.com).



(Image 2: Durieux’s Work)

What this demonstrates is that AMPs command and celebrate artistic vision, the community focusing on this aspect as one of the significant differentiating characteristic between AMPs and officially produced studio publicity materials. The artists behind AMPs often hold similar résumé’s to Laurent Durieux, often recognised for their ability internally and externally to the AMP field. In a similar vein to Jaws’ cultural position shifting over time, the value of hindsight and provenance has similarly impacted film poster art. Once the main means of publicising new attractions to the cinema going masses, film posters from the last century now hold a level of cultural esteem as works of art in their own right, often housed in museums and some commending high economic prices sold in several of the most prestigious auction houses worldwide, as will be noted in Chapter 4. AMPs seek to capture an element of the nostalgic allure of illustrated poster art, one which is potentially the reason behind the initial popularity of the AMP movement whose audience crave a time when poster

materials were rife with artistic integrity, craftsmanship and skill. Durieux (amongst other AMP artists) embodies the concept that AMPs are not merely fan art, but artworks, thus raising the cultural (and very likely economic) position and capital adopted by AMPs, particularly so in the eyes of the collector. It is these characteristics that help initially determine the field in which AMPs operate, and the subfields which become apparent to this thesis, namely collecting, art/craft and film. The intermingling of subfields leading to a balanced final product in high demand from an ever-expanding community.

As noted, arguably Durieux's most recognisable and popular poster[29], his AMP for Jaws was initially met with a lukewarm reception, likely the result of Durieux being a relatively unknown artist entering the community. However, 'buzz' soon grew after reports that Spielberg himself admired the poster enough to 'pull a few strings' and obtain twenty-five copies to give as gifts to friends and family (Marks 2013)[30]. This, combined with a timeless, artistically rendered image, and the subsequent growth of Durieux's reputation as an artist, have resulted in a now iconic AMP currently selling on the aftermarket for between $4,000 and $6,000.

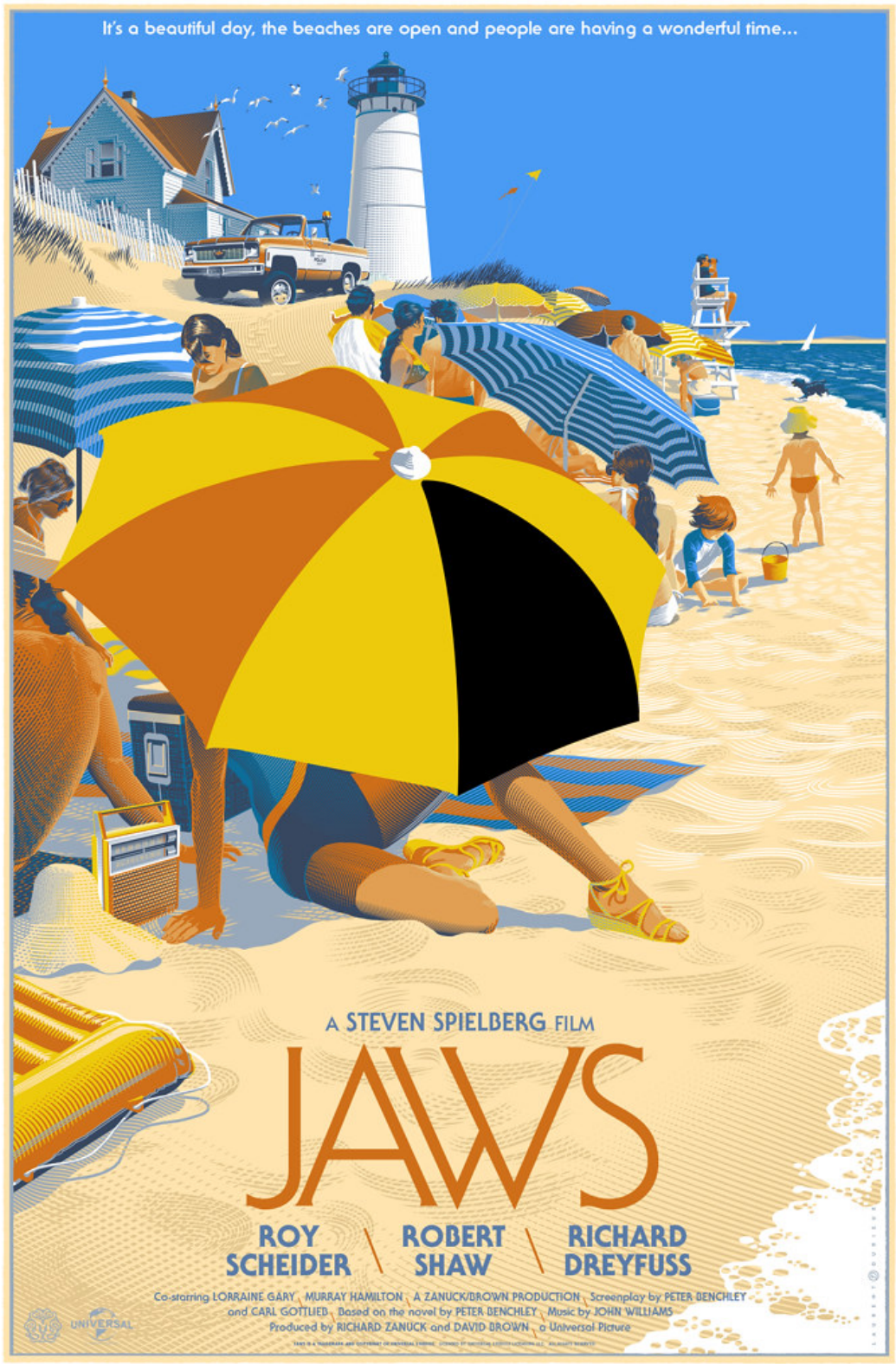
This interplay of property, art and community engagement, further demonstrates the potential value of analysing AMPs against various Bourdieusian concepts of capital. Here, various aspects of capital come together in synergy to generate a greater value assigned to the AMP and engaged with by the collector

[29] This is naturally a subjective statement but current aftermarket prices represent a relatively stable measure of popularity and Durieux's Jaws print continues to grow in resale value.

[30] Of further related interest the fact that other reputable filmmakers have approached or highlighted Durieux, Nicholas Winding Refn commissioning him to produce the album artwork for his helmed release of the Oldboy (dir. Chan Wook 2003) soundtrack. Francis Ford Coppola has also personally built a relationship with Durieux, where Laurent has designed official artwork for Coppola's work and even graphics for the directors Wine Label.

through their practice within a discerning community. Social capital is achieved in examples such as the commentary surrounding Spielberg's interest in the print, shared via platforms such as social media and becoming somewhat mythical in subsequent years[31]. An example of Cultural Capital is that which is bound to the film (it's cult and now classic status), alongside the artistic integrity of the imagery and the production process bound to the craft of screenprinting (to be discussed shortly). Durieux's rise in profile, along with the 'legend' of the print, continues to raise the potential Cultural Capital embodied by this particular AMP. Finally, there is a definitive devolution to the power of economic capital, naturally influenced by the continued growth in popularity surrounding the poster, its status championed by collectors and supported in comments and conversations. The value of production compounded by the nature of AMPs being 'limited edition' a natural practicality of screenprinting, simultaneously adds scarcity and generates demand. The production, distribution and collecting practices surrounding AMPs represent an interesting balance of capitals, where the importance of such a concept is to be reevaluated in relation to these AMPs across later chapters.

[31] This is often referenced within community interactions, for example one forum member commenting as to the minimal popularity of a new AMP for Doom (dir. Andrzej Bartkowiak. 2005) comments "You guys will all be sorry when Spielberg shows off his new Doom posters" and another saying "I bought a bunch of Durieux's Jaws prints from some guy on eBay and signed my name S. Spielberb" in relation to the soaring aftermarket value of the print.



(Image 3: Jaws – Laurent Durieux)

Following the success of Durieux's Jaws poster, he has subsequently released a fully licensed[32] screenprinted AMP for *Jaws 2* (dir. Jeannot Szwarc 1978) through MondoTees, again 'hiding' the fin of the shark somewhat subtly in a wave of a water-skier (see appendix). Similar to the sequel itself, this AMP has not quite met the same level of success across the community, both reputationally and economically through resale. That said, this print, originally priced at $65 has since been sold for over $400, with a number of recent sales hovering around $350, demonstrating the value placed on Durieux's artwork and the general collectability of AMPs. This also demonstrates a further collector motivation in owning a 'set' of something, where many collectors who purchased the first print feel somewhat driven, perhaps even obligated, to obtain the second for the sake of completionism. This is not rare in collecting more broadly speaking, and many AMPs are produced in either sets relative to film franchises by the same artist, or in several editions. Most commonly a 'regular' and a 'variant' edition. An example of this can be seen in Durieux's next release in his 'Jaws series'.

More recently, Durieux has produced and sold a run of prints 'inspired' by the original film and distributed through his own online AMP company, Nautilus Art Prints. These posters, titled 'Martha's Vineyard', amalgamate the AMP with a more conventional travel poster style representing the location of the films production. This further appeals to the knowledgeable 'film fan' AMP collector through replicating his artistic style and tone of his popular first print to appease collector interest in said item. This embedding of subtle reference points to the source material often acts as a further point of distinction from studio publicity materials, colloquially mirroring the more

[32] Meaning the distributor has sought legal consent and obtained contracts to generate AMPs for sale based on the original subject matter. While this is not always the case with AMP collection as will be established in brief later it has little impact in driving the 'collectability' of such AMPs. Here, an official print or a 'bootleg' private commission will rarely be held in higher esteem than one another based on this aspect alone

conventional notion of ‘easter eggs’ hidden throughout films themselves. The added nuance appeals to collectors whose identities are somewhat crafted through their love of film, where the average member of the public may miss such references, another way to reinforce and potentially demonstrate cultural capital in their knowledge of cinema. To date, ten different versions have been produced by Durieux, each in their own limited run and often changed subtly using the same image but different colourways to evoke mood, tone and time of the day. Title changes to aid differentiation include ‘Regular, Variant, Sunrise and Sunset’, the regular version has been included below. It is rare to produce such an array of slightly different AMPs using the same artwork, however this again reinforces the popularity of the franchise and Durieux as an artist in the community, with some collectors seeking to obtain a print of each version.

To reiterate the conventions of the AMP production, all versions of ‘Martha’s Vineyard’ have been produced as screenprints at a size of 24” x 36” in a limited run of prints. This begins to contextualise the field of AMP collecting which is defined in multiple ways beyond production, many of which will be unpacked across the thesis. However, methods involved in design and manufacture provide a very defined set system of nuances production elements that often define collector motivation.

Most commonly AMPs will be screenprinted, an intensive production method where layers of ink are ‘stencilled’ through fabric material (traditionally silk but now synthetic materials, commonly polyester, are used) to build up an image. This generates a tactile and vibrant final product, naturally relevant qualities for a print which is to be framed and displayed. Beyond this, the juxtaposition between the digital printer and the more ‘handmade’ aesthetic of the screenprint is alluring to the collector, perceiving it to add quality to both the item and, by proxy, the subject matter. This

gives the collector a physical point of contact with the film, produced in a manner that reinforces the level of esteem that the collector themselves places on such movies, bound together in the quality of image that an artist such as Durieux can provide.

Just When You Thought it was Safe to go Back in the Water…

In 2018 Kastel's infamous original poster was 'rereleased' by MondoTees (at this point in the company's history it has become more commonly referred to as simply 'Mondo'), with the exception that it was given the AMP treatment. Namely, the same expectations outlined above, size, limited edition run and, perhaps most importantly, screenprinted. This is particularly interesting in this example as the process to reproduce the original image required a significant amount of artistic and technical ability from another reputable AMP artist, Jason Edmiston. The original oil painted artwork needed to be reproduced in its entirety by Edmiston, who painstakingly analysed the various colours used in the artwork to then be digitally recreated as layers of colour, allowing for the final rendering to be effectively screenprinted (Whalen 2018). Creating these layers is referred to as 'separating' the artwork, and defining the colour for each layer is termed 'trapping'. These terminological nuances are parlance within the community who, as part of practice, seek to become knowledgeable of the process as to demonstrate further cultural capital. As part of the technicality of the process, in this instance Edmiston employed his experienced artistic understanding of screenprinting, utilising 'transparent inks' in his recreation. These inks have colour but allow other inks to 'show through' from underlying layers to produce the impression of further colours, for example laying blue on yellow produces a shade of green. This means that two layers of printing can produce three colours (or more depending on separations and trapping), emphasising the craftsmanship embedded in the process.

The final result is a screenprint made up of just nine layers but with the impression of being as vibrant and colourful as Kastel's original artwork. As part of the process, the final layers are sent digitally to the screenprinter, in this case New York based printer DL Screenprinting, where each layer is printed individually, and left to dry between layers being added (or 'pulled'). While some mechanical intervention is now common, much of the process requires hands on intervention. On a significant edition size (this particular print was produced in two editions with 280 posters per edition) this process can take several weeks to complete as each layer of ink is left to dry between 'screens'. The prints are finally all hand numbered before being sold and shipped, packaged carefully between tissue and craft paper.

This level of effort is comparatively normal for AMP production, again evidencing the distance placed between AMPs and standard studio publicity materials. This is much more than 'pressing the print key' on a computer screen, with meticulous levels of detail paid to every aspect of production. This has not only become expected within the community, but demanded by it, many collectors further rationalising their practice basing their decisions around printing process. The process again parallels the imbuing of capital values, while simultaneously determining the distinctions evident within the field, the characteristics which make AMPs worthwhile to collectors. This process of overproduction becomes instrumental in later chapters in line with the argument presented relating to capital influence in justifying the practice of the collector. As noted these methods seek to assign the subject matter a level of credibility which is perhaps not mimicked through the more traditional means of tangible publicity materials.

Craft and the screenprinting process is important to the collector for raising the profile, and ultimately the value, of the print. In this particular example it inevitably becomes less about the iconic image/artwork and all about the process (printing). For the majority of AMP collectors, it is these nuances that truly define an AMP and guarantees interest from the individual. They may not choose to obtain a lithograph reproduction of Kastel's poster, the variety of which you might find in a Highstreet record store. Nor will they search for an original version displayed in cinema foyers worldwide, possibly due to the potentially significant cost[33] but more likely that it does not meet their predetermined criteria for collecting. The film permeates society, as does its infamous poster artwork, and as such is immediately recognisable and iconic. Even the novice film fan respects the calibre of Jaws within the history of cinema and would likely recognise the original poster at a glance. AMPs seek to take things further, allowing the film fan to represent a significant element of their character (potentially intertwined with their habitus as to be outlined later in the thesis) to allow them to rise above this average movie goer and, given the particularities of the production process, perhaps even the self-proffered film fan. The AMP allows them to take ownership of an aspect of the film, allowing the collector to demonstrate the value they place on cinema to others who may not be able to offer any such tangible rebuttal.

In Conclusion

This case study sought to introduce AMPs at a point in the thesis where subsequent development of such ideas has, hopefully, being sufficiently signposted. Where Jaws, the original summer blockbuster movie and now canon in classic cinema,

[33] An original US one sheet in 'fine+' condition is currently available online for $1650 (https://filmartgallery.com/collections/jaws-posters/products/jaws-9672), a significant cost but less than half the cost of Durieux's Jaws AMP.

might have been perceived by Bourdieu as low culture and poor taste, the mechanisms at play in AMP production and practice are more akin to those reflected in acquired cultural capital inherently linked to high culture (art and craft) (Fiske 1992). Though Jaws has now been met with a critical level of esteem, it still thematically represents those same issues Bourdieu associates with the likes of popular culture in general, and this opinion would certainly transcend across a significant swathe of the subject matter found in AMPs. From Star Wars to Marvel, John McClane to Max Rockatansky, many AMPs represent 'fan favourite' movies and franchises which, while popular, would likely fall into the lowbrow category for Bourdieu, limiting their potential capital value.

However, it is in the relative production values that the collector sees these values embedded in the AMP as an artefact, which has the potential to transcend to the film property that they deem significant, regardless of its more general cultural position. Over a number of years this desire to collect screenprints for collectors' 'favourite films' has led to a very significant number of officially licensed and released Jaws AMPs (see below for a selective group of examples). These films, which infiltrate the very identity of the collector, are placed on a pedestal that is difficult to argue when considering the raw artistic talent and intensive practice that is part of AMP production, justifying their adoration of film and, perhaps more importantly, their motivation to collect. While this case study is only a brief introduction to the nuances of AMPs it cements the need to address the various attributes embedded in AMP production, how they specifically affect and influence the collectors practice and, above all else, what makes AMPs more than just another publicity poster.


JAWS
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JAWS

Image 4: Artists credits from top left:
Doaly, Florey, George Bletsis, Karl Fitzgerald, Mark Smith, Phantom City Creative, Matt Ferguson, Kevin Wilson, Laurent Durieux x 3 (Jaws, Jaws 2 and Martha's Vineyard, regular edition), Roger Kastel (original one sheet), Roger Kastel screenprint recreated and separated for screenprinting by Jason Edmiston (original and art print variant).

Chapter 2 – Collecting, Consumption, and Cognition

A Literature Review All About Collecting

This literature review will outline the field of collecting studies in relation to its history and recent conceptual developments. Beginning with an overview of the subject's growth, current perspectives and key texts within the field, the review will swiftly move to identify the main areas of previous academic interest within this discipline. Initially, while Museum Studies does not necessarily predate collecting studies, the two areas are symbiotic in a number of interests, therefore this area (very much a discipline in its own right) informs and supports the motivations of collecting and the significant impact of this practice on the cultural, political and sociological sphere.

Beyond this, collecting and notions of identity, where the characteristics of the collector are reinforced in the processes of collecting, has been a key debate within this field. Similarly linked, the psychologies of the collector and collecting have been developed as a means to support the enthusiasm and drive often seen within individuals who actively take part in the pursuit of collecting ephemera. This same passionate process is reinforced through the concept of consumption as a form of practice, which is to be discussed as an inherent aspect of collecting activity and the study of collecting across contemporary texts. While the literature review omits much of Bourdieu's work interlinked with collecting, the use of his concepts by those studying collecting will be briefly introduced. Bourdieu's Thinking Tools will be utilised across the thesis and it is apt that his work is noted in relation to collecting, particularly when this activity (practice) can be clearly integrated with notions of habitus, field, practice and capital. However previous usage of these devices in this discipline has been limited. Building on the commentary in the introduction, Bourdieu's work will be integral to the later chapters, addressing capital and taste relative to the notion that while

collecting is often an individual pursuit the elements of the practice are, broadly speaking, homogenously shared amongst collectors. It is in these similarities across the motivations of the collector that Bourdieu's work can offer some element of structure and explanation. Therefore, his principle perspectives will act as a constant anchor throughout the thesis.

This literature review indicates that while collecting is of academic interest, its scope as a practice has yet to be fully realised, particularly in relation to the vast array of motivations that encourage collecting and how these are valued by the collector. In demonstrating this wide interest in a common practice, this chapter will demonstrate that collecting itself is a legitimate activity, allowing for the same concept to be readdressed in regard to AMP collectors later in the thesis. Similarly, notions of taste and capital values as defined by the collector/s will also form the basis of later chapters, therefore it is important to note here that collecting, broadly speaking, is definitively linked to these concepts. Therefore, this review will set the ground work to follow, focusing upon why collectors collect, how they perceive their actions with collecting as an interest adding value to the individual, both personal and economic (the latter rarely discussed alongside collecting within academia). To reiterate, Bourdieu's work focusing on the latter, particularly the acquisition and distribution of capital, aims to add rigour to the surrounding discussion applying these notions to the specific motivations of the collector and the production of collectible ephemera.

The Study of Collecting

Collecting as a general human interest is difficult to pinpoint. Belk (1995) suggests that an array of interesting pebbles found together in a cave in France dating back 80,000 years could mark the first collection on record. Beyond this, widespread collecting is

linked to the rulers of ancient civilisations, "including those of China, India, Egypt, Sumaria, Assyria, Persia, and Babylonia" (1995: 2) and a number of scholars have documented this pre-modern period of collection in detail (see, for instance, Belk 1995; Pearce 1995; Bounia 2006). However, it is the more modern practices of collecting that have dominated academic literature since the turn of the 20th century (to coincide with the origins of consumer led collecting), with a particular interest in the subject being revived in the 1980s[1] and up to the present day, leading to an influx of literature surfacing around the themes of collecting and contingent academic fields. Examples include research regarding collecting and consumption (Belk 1988; 1995; Martin 1999; Dilworth 2003), Museum Studies (Thomson 1986; Lumley 1988; Vergo 1989; Hooper-Greenhill 1991; Pearce 1992; Macdonald 2010; Golding & Modest 2013), and the study of human development through the practice of collecting (Baudrillard 1968; Danet & Katriel 1989; Stewart 1993; Elsner & Cardinal 1994; Pearce 1997).

The interest in understanding the politics of collecting was initially underpinned during the era that private popular collecting activity originated, namely the mid to late Victorian Period, post 1850 (Black 2000; Pykett 2005). Alongside a greater level of disposable income due to advances in technology and industry, the world became easier to navigate leading to an increasing interest in the exotic, an interest which was satisfied through the collecting of curiosities to be arranged and displayed (Martin 1994; Belk 1995; Macdonald 2010). The notions of obtaining 'curiosities' and then organising them, forms the basis of the study of collecting to this day. Early studies tended to focus sweepingly on areas of interest ranging from notions related to

[1] Arguably this increase in interest is derivative of a renewed interest in collecting itself. A rise in admission prices for museums in the 1980s (linked to pressures from the Conservative government of the time seeking to decrease expenditure), potentially reinvigorated museum studies as more attention was given to these institutions. In the late nineties Pearce (1996) offered the tentative figure that a third of British adults engaged in collecting, where further elements of industrialisation and disposable income allowed for this interest to flourish. This led to a greater interest in the motivations of individual collectors.

children's associations with collecting (Burk 1900; Whitely 1929) to examples of institutional collecting such as the categorical work of Newton titled 'The Collection of Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum' (1916). These texts represent the broad spectrum of interest in collecting studies during this period and, along with other similar cases, pioneered the study of the subject. However, these same examples filtered the scope of the discipline to focus upon the literal act of collecting (personal and institutional), the curation of collections, and a more minimal review of the psychological reasoning of the collector in regards to consumption and ownership. While all of these areas have their distinct merits and contribute to the wider field, these same texts neglect any real interest in adding any analytical depth of understanding the motivations of the collector, which are unavoidably interlinked with the fundamental act of collecting itself, particularly in regards to capital (economic of otherwise) accumulation. This is not to say that all elements of collecting studies related to this area are derivative or lacking in rigor. Indeed, texts will be introduced later in this review which emphasise the focused (but ultimately limited) review of this particular topic. In essence these texts emphasise how we collect, muse as to why we collect, but neglect how the practice of collecting is justified by the collector and what value they may attribute to these activities/actions.

With a large array of disciplines involved in the study of collecting, it would be sensible at this point to define a collector in relation to collecting, and a collection. Although broad, McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004) offer a foundation which will inform the nature of these terms for the purposes of this thesis. Here a collector is ''a person who is motivated to accumulate a series of similar objects where the instrumental function of the objects is of secondary (or no) concern and the person does not plan to immediately dispose of the objects'' (2004: 86). However, this is accepted on the

proviso that there is a fine temporal line between accumulating and collecting which is often governed in the attitudes and actions of the collector (Pearce 1994). Although McIntosh and Schmeichel's definition offers clarity, it potentially neglects those items which are pre-designated collectibles (instant collectibles) as opposed to items which are collected outside of their determined functional use. This is also true of similar definitions from others such as those made by Duroust (1934), Kron (1983) and Belk (1988), the latter of which defines collecting in relation to other forms of similar consumption. Belk identifies collecting as separate from acquiring, possessing, and hoarding, where the notion of selective consumption is intrinsic to collecting. This same distinction is also listed by Kron (1983) where a collector is a distinction set aside from someone who simply accumulates.

The subjectivity of the collector in regards to their possessions may also predicate the nature of a collection as opposed to an accumulation of items. In this regard Belk et al, put forward the analogy that a coin collector and a miser collect money, but the criterion of selectivity suggests that the latter sees it as a commodity and not a collection (1988). Pearce (1994; 1997) accentuates the notion of a collector and collecting as being subjective, stating that it is the mentality of the collector that defines if their acquisitions are a collection or not, an issue supported by Macdonald who distinguishes collecting as "a self-aware process of creating a set of objects conceived to be meaningful as a group" (2010: 82). Therefore, it is the mindset of the collector that deems a collection to be greater than the sum of its parts (Pearce 1994), the synergy of the collection exists through it being defined by the collector as such (Macdonald 2010). Similarly, the collection itself is also defined by the other objects within the collection and the relationships between these objects and the collector (Lafferty, Matulich, and Liu 2013). A collector chooses to collect a series of items which

are interlinked in a self-determined way (as opposed to hoarding or accumulating) and shifts them from their primary function, if they indeed possessed a utility before being made part of a collection. The process of collecting is thus seen as subjective and it is the mentality of the collector which often defines both themselves and their collection.

That said, these attempts to define a singular notion as to what a collector/collection is can be difficult with many authors offering their own tentative interpretations on the subject. With this in mind Macdonald (2010) puts forward the suggestion that this is not a homogeneity and therefore a standard definition which blankets all collectors/collecting has the potential to be too broad or too complex. Therefore, Pearce's final ascertain that: "collecting is too complex and too human an activity to be dealt with summarily by way of definitions" (1994: 159), highlights an overall lack of agreement amidst competing academic interpretations. It is also worth mentioning that while many have attempted to define the politics of collecting, definition of the 'marketplace' and the economies of the practice are often overlooked. Although this thesis will not explore all of the facets potentially associated with this area, it will introduce the nature of economic considerations that a collector may find motivating, inherent to their practice and a primary aspect involved in justifying their actions.

Academic interest in collecting has grown steadily, with Susan M. Pearce and Russell W. Belk spearheading this development with a stringent academic focus on the subject. The contributions of Pearce in particular to this field are well noted and her work offers a solid understanding as to the importance of collecting to both society and academia. Pearce (1994) identifies three broad areas of collecting studies which have been the subject of discussion within the field. The first area refers to the area of collection policies (what should be collected and why), the second covers the history

of collections and the third concentrates on why individuals collect. Pearce states that these areas are intimately interwoven and represent what she sees as the field of collecting studies.

Pearce (1992) has attempted to conceptualise the processes of collecting into a comprehensive list of seventeen motivations. The list offers several key points of interest which may not be directly developed but implicitly are relevant to pinpointing later discussion topics both within the review and beyond into subsequent chapters. This list is comprised as follows: leisure, aesthetics, completion, risk, fantasy, a sense of community, prestige, domination, sensual gratification, sexual foreplay, desire to reframe objects, the pleasing rhythm of sameness and difference, ambition to achieve perfection, extending the self, reaffirming the body, producing gender identity, and achieving immortality. While this list is thorough in its scope of various motivations to collect, the development in each area is inconsistent, with subjects such as ‘sensual gratification’ being less explored than the notion of ‘achieving immortality’. Pearce’s work in this field, spearheaded by an interest in museology (1992), seeks to document the myriad of forces behind collecting practices both at an institutional level (1992) and a more personal level related to the individual collection (1994; 1997). This distinction serves a wider purpose within the field of collecting studies, where museum studies offer an initial insight into the practices of collecting, but the motivations here are relatable to a wider interest related to national and geographical identities. These foundations have given way to allow for further investigation on obtaining a more contemporary understanding of the individual collector, a concept which has become more common within developed society. Here, academic interest has opened a door to understand the arguably intrinsic human process of acquisition and collecting.

With this in mind, Russell Belk (1988; 1995), who's previous academic interests include consumer behavioural studies, has contributed several texts to the field of collecting studies which represent an underlying theme of understanding collecting as a form of consumption. The focus is on collecting as a political act against a backdrop of postmodern capitalism and a societal drive to consume. From this basis, Belk offers a broad but relatively thorough review of collecting incorporating discussions across a variety of topics common to collecting studies. Belk (1988, 1995) documents the history of collecting alongside notions of identity, the psychologies of the collector, and elements pertaining to the practices of exchange. Though Belk has introduced a number of concepts related to the practice of collecting, there are instances when these discussions lack depth (Belk 1988; 1995; Pearce 1992), particularly around the explicit concept of what is gained by the individual from the act, focusing upon why a collector engages in practice but not what 'value' they achieve from it. Notably, elements of Pearce and Belk's work on this area share links with the work of Susan Stewart and her most notable text within this field, 'On Longing' (1993). Stewart offers further insight while reflecting on themes related to Marxism and psychology, presenting a discussion as to the importance between collecting and the mediation of time and space for the collector. The presentation of the collection is evaluated as are the meanings generated for items by their owner. For Stewart these items are considered to be 'souvenirs', collections imbued with their own narrative and history which is relatable not only to the collector but also the other items housed within the collection itself.

To return to the works of Pearce and Belk (both of whom offer a strong overview of collecting practices) the reasons and nature of collecting are consistently brought into question within more current academic study, thus demonstrating a consistent

interest in this area but one which maintains a necessity to evaluate further. More recently an interest in contemporary collecting has led the way for several key works of note. Paul Martin takes a Debordian[2] position, offering a 'neo-Marxist' discussion on collecting, reviewing postmodern themes linked to commoditisation and the urge to collect. Many of his arguments find a basis in those topics discussed by others, surmising that collecting ''acts as a means by which self-assurance and social equilibrium are replaced when socio economic forces threaten to destabilize them'' (1999: 1). Essentially, contemporary collecting for Martin offers an element of societal security to the collector where said society is deemed to be in a constant state of flux. This comfort (potentially linked to the formative years of the individual) is derived from the ownership of popular culture, where the characteristics of the ephemera share elements of their past with the collector, thus determining their position in society. It could be argued that an element of security which is derived from collecting is that of financial security in the form of investment, and notions of how one can commodify security of both finances and the self through collecting. Although this may only relate to specific items, the importance of this concern is relevant to the overall understanding related to the motivations of collecting, particularly individual collecting[3].

Similarly, the notion of articulating the values obtained by the individual via collecting are overlooked in Leah Dilworth's anthology of (contemporary) collecting within America part of an edited work entitled *Acts of Possession: Collecting in America* (2003). In line with Martin, the themes of human-object relations arise, where objects are collected as a part of the process of meaning making for the

[2] Based on the work of Guy Debord surrounding Marxist debates and the impact of 'the spectacle', a control system mechanised through mass media which in turn governs society. See *Society of the Spectacle* (Debord 1967) which further critiques consumer culture in the vein of Marx.

[3] As opposed to institutional collecting, though they would not be excluded from such motivations.

individual/institution. Here the meaning may be linked back to national identity, a theme which has been explored in more detail within Museum Studies and beyond. These consistent and well-founded themes allow for the various essays to apply concepts related to collecting to three main areas of interest within this text. The first area understands collecting as a process where objects are removed from the exterior world and brought within. This concept, related by others to ownership and control (e.g. Belk 1995; Pearce 1997) is logical and offers some clarity but, by default, neglects the marketplace which surrounds most collecting activity. The second topic discusses concepts of gender and collecting, again an area of previous note (e.g. Stewart 1993; Pearce 1994; Belk 1995). Finally, the text moves to discuss the limitations of collecting as a study, where collecting becomes an issue of contention and moves beyond a passion and into compulsion and addiction. This concept, although of interest, is often discounted within the definition of collecting as being separate from other examples of more compulsive accumulation (Durost 1932; Pearce 1992; 1994; 1997; Belk 1995 etc.) but it still represents an interlinking theme that may need to be considered beyond Dilworth's text.

Elsner and Cardinal's collection of essays found within their text *'The Cultures of Collecting'* (1994) offers a broad review of relevant interests starting with the republication of Jean Baudrillard's seminal essay '*The System of Collecting'* (originally published 1968), reframing Baudrillard's concepts against contemporary collecting studies. Elsner and Cardinal's collection also considers a variety of topics, namely related to the taxonomies of collecting and archival, where conservation exists as a form of 'higher purpose' for the collector. The concepts associated between collecting as a form of identity generation and, in this regard, the text focuses on the individual collector as opposed to the institution. Also of note is the interest of the pathology of

the collector, outlining why collecting as a pursuit for individuals allows them to understand the society in which they exist and its political framework.

Across these main texts the psychological motivations of collecting are continually referred to as one of the key components of study in this field, yet even this sub discipline is questioned by Baekeland (1994) as he addresses art collectors within his work:

> What impels the art collector to acquire works of art? Art historians have steadfastly turned their backs on this question, and psychiatrists and psychoanalysts have not had much to say on the matter either. Patients, after all, do not seek psychiatric services because they are collectors. Yet to anyone at all familiar with art collectors, it is clear that their reasons for collecting are both diverse and complex.
>
> (1994: 205)

While collecting studies is underpinned with the notion that it represents an often irrational and illogical practice within a societal context, a parallel review as to the reason's individuals collect has formed the source of many debates. Jean Baudrillard (1968) offers an understanding of collecting as a pursuit of passionate possession, collecting objects as a means to control elements of the individuals own place within an overburdening society. Furthermore Benjamin (1969) openly discusses his own passions behind book collecting. Here the collection is an attempt to organise memories where each item (book) shares a connection to its own past and the past of the owner. In Benjamin's account the collection is part of the collector, and this passion to collect is to offer organisation and control within chaos, to save and secure. The simple concept of 'why we collect' exists throughout literature on this topic, but not necessarily the values a collector assigns to their pursuits, or the capital that comes

from practice and ownership. As a result, this will be the focus of the thesis in the later chapters, where these motivations are considered against their objectively and subjectively assigned values as designated by the collector and the field/subfield in which practice operates.

The burgeoning interest in collecting studies which resurfaced in the 1980s and into the 1990s, is arguably the result of a renewed investigation in the area of Museum Studies, which in turn further kindled the interest in collecting and curation from an industrial and socio-cultural perspective, where the institution and not the individual was/is of interest to the researcher (Martin 1994; Pearce 1992; Dilworth 2003; McIntosh 2004; Macdonald 2010). With this in mind, the motivations of the museum share similarities with the individual collectors' own pursuits and thus make this area an interesting parallel topic linked to the themes of this thesis. These similarities exist in the first instance through the need of museums to display their collections to distinguish a history and identity of an area (Macdonald 2010) and it is this notion that acts as a way of initially legitimising the concept of collecting for the independent collector, in that those objects offer a very real and personal meaning to the individual. This has been further enforced over time as the content of collections has been supplied more and more by the middle classes (as opposed to the bourgeoisie) in turn labelling collecting as an accessible pursuit beyond income and class (Macdonald 2010).

Macdonald (2010) also raises the concept that the displays of museums, showcasing items of value and desirability, has been borrowed within retail with the goal of driving the possessive appetite for consumables and, interestingly, collectible items akin to the notion of conspicuous consumption and Veblen goods (where a higher potential price signifies a higher quality and increased desire to own). These

retail items, imbued with the qualities of museum artifices, can be bought and collected and this in turn fuels an economy of consumption which is also relevant to the interests of this thesis.

Museum Studies, driven by the importance of collections to the institute for reasons such as cultural heritage, preservation of artefacts, and the relationship between collected items and local/national/international identity (Pearce 1992; Macdonald 2010), solidified the importance of a collection and the act of collecting. These notions potentially reflect other studies which focus upon the individual collector who themselves often house their own 'museum' of artefacts (Benjamin 1969; Belk 1994; 1995). It is in this regard that a number of authors have indicated the potential for independent private collectors to contribute to museums in both their artefactual resources and their expertise (Martin 1994). However, Baekeland (1994) conjoins the issues of independent and intuitional collectors as he brings forward the concept that some individual collectors now question the nature of museums in regards to being suitable to house their private collections. This consideration potentially supports the interest in personal collecting in the latter decades of the 20th century (Martin 1999) and, although not an explicit consideration of this thesis, this in turn highlights a need for a renewed investigation into this area where theories of individual collecting are mapped alongside institutional collecting with resulting synergies as a by-product of further cooperation.

The list of what is considered collectible is essentially endless, where self-titled collectors acquire anything from fine art to film memorabilia to coins to traffic cones, as in the case of David Morgan of West Oxfordshire who owns over 500 different traffic

cone examples.[4] The variance in collectibles is acknowledged across literature in this field (Hughes 1984; Belk 1995). Where collecting for Baudrillard is based in the 'passion' for ownership and control of everyday objects and items, repurposed as collected ephemera (1968), a concept shared by others including Belk (1995) and Martin (1999), this potentially neglects notions surrounding items designated specifically as 'collectibles' (Lafferty et al define these items as 'Instant Collectables') (2013:4)[5].

For these authors, all objects are instilled with two functions, namely to be used in their practical sense and to be owned or possessed. Of the two functions the latter coincides with the field of instant collectibles, the area most closely linked to the interests of this thesis. However, the concept of the 'use' of these particular items is not currently detailed within literature. Baudrillard utilises an analogy of using a refrigerator to refrigerate and in this manner it is "not an object but a refrigerator" (1968: 1). This is its use but can this same concept be applied to items designated as collectibles? A coin can be spent, but there are many coin collectors who repurpose this object. A stamp is used to provide a service but they are taken and archived in the books of philatelists. These examples are consistent when reviewing the many key areas of universally assumed collectors and the overarching concept is explored in brief by Baudrillard in his notions that once the object is "abstracted from its use, [it] takes on a strictly subjective status: it becomes part of a collection" (1968:2). This same consideration is discussed by Macdonald where "in a collection, objects take on additional significance specifically by dint of being part of the collection; and, in most

[4] David Morgan is listed in the Guinness Book of Records for having the largest collection go traffic cones on record. Sourced from http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com and http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk.

[5] The concept of designated instant collectibles having a distinct functional capability has yet to be explored academically, potentially due in part to there being few obvious examples which prescribe to the definitions of authors in the field.

cases, the life of objects once in a collection is notably different from their pre-collection existence" (2010: 82).

As this thesis focuses on the collection of limited-edition alternative movie posters, produced, published and marketed as items to collect, their *use* could then simply be to be collected. If so, this initially confirms a marketplace for collectable items and this evolves into a discussion as to what do these items fulfil within human desires and how this is 'valued'. These notions can be linked back to the same ideas discussed which surround collecting theories and the passions of collecting that have been identified across the discourse of collecting studies (e.g. Baudrillard 1968; Pearce 1992; 1997; Belk 1994; Martin 1999 etc.). However, although they are designed to be collected this is potentially a secondary or adjacent purpose behind the gratifications achieved through investment, ownership and the overriding aesthetics of the item (Baekeland, 1995), not to mention that there is a definitive utility attached to their ability to be displayed. That said, the focus of the collectible marketplace of AMPs and the community which surrounds them, takes the notion of studying the values of instant collectibles beyond any surface level discussions which exist at this point. Their value to this area of study has often been set aside but here it becomes a paramount focus as these collectibles can be reviewed alongside the motivations of collectors, their politics and the economies which surround collecting..

Collecting for many individuals takes on a pursuit of passion (Baudrillard 1968; Belk 1988; Danet & Katriel 1989; Elsner& Cardinal 1994; Pearce 1995; Tashio 1996; Dilworth 2003), one which seemingly presents itself regardless of the artefact being an instant collectible or not. At times this has been referred to as a fetish (Belk 1988; Stewart 1993; Elsner& Cardinal 1994; Pearce 1995; Plotz 1999; Lafferty et al 2013) and the process of collecting for many shares themes with fetishism. However, Pearce

proposes a less ‘unpleasant term’ such as devoted or even obsessive collecting (1994). In a similar vein it is noted that the compulsive nature of collecting can be seen to share similarities with addiction (Danet and Katriel 1986; Belk 1988). This point is contrasted in the fact that although arguments for collecting as a process are voluntary (Danet and Katriel 1986), collectors themselves may describe their own pursuits as addiction (Belk 1988). As this is a subjective issue of distinction, it is perhaps necessary to be aware of the potential addictive qualities manifest in collecting behaviours but to continue to refer to this activity as ‘passionate’. While there are elements of obsession surrounding AMP collecting, it is not consistently obsessive in the same extremes as mentioned above.

Collecting and passion are discussed across several texts (including early investigation within the field) as often being derivative of collecting motivations related to childhood development (Burk 1900; Baudrillard 1968, Danet & Katriel 1989; Baekeland in Pearce 1994; Pearce 1994; Macdonald 2010; Lafferty et al 2013) including the social activities attached to this practice within early years development (Duroust 1932; Danet & Katriel 1989; Lafferty et al 2013). Lafferty et al proffer that collecting is more prominent amongst children than adults and that more children collect prior to the age of twelve but loose this interest as they reach teenage years (2013). This could potentially be the result of the argument that collecting is seen as a form of play, with its own rules and structure (Stewart 1984; Danet & Katriel 1989) and this structure allows for the collector to control aspects of their world (Plotz 1999). Play is not exclusive to collectors who are children and this can be reviewed in parallel with adult collecting (Pearce 1997; Heljakka 2017). However, the origins of collecting, manifest in childhood, may still be derived from notions related to play (Danet & Katriel 1989).

The concepts of ownership and control that are intrinsic to collecting, which are explored in childhood are further manifest in later life. Any potential concepts related to collecting appealing to an adult audience who wish to initiate a relationship with those instances of collecting in the past, have lacked thorough exploration throughout academic exploration of notions related to this theme. The closest area of investigation is the relationship between collecting and nostalgia (Benjamin 1969; Baudrillard 1968; Martin 1994; Pearce 1994; Geraghty 2014). Conceptualised in Stewart's (1993) work as defining the collectable as a 'souvenir', this term is intrinsic to notions of affixing items with the past. It is worth mentioning that nostalgia has been utilised to address an array of relevant, parallel topics to collecting, surrounding consumption and motivation. Nostalgia have been shown to lead to positive purchase responses when used in advertising (Pascal et al 2012; Hinsch et al 2020) and in relation to notions of identity being founded within an individual's past (Iyer and Jetten 2011; Bennet 2018), further expanding into notions of culture and history in relation to geographical locals and their impact on an individual's identity (El-Bassiouny and Zahran 2018).

Nostalgia as a theme is of further interest/relevance to the following chapter surrounding engagement with popular culture, but in regards to nostalgias impact on collecting, it allows time itself to be controlled within the collection and through the act of collecting (Baudrillard 1968; Stewart 1993; Plotz 1999; Macdonald 2010) with each item defining its own history alongside that of the collectors understanding of the same item and its past. This can be attributed to the collecting of film memorabilia itself (Poole & Poole 1997; Klinger 2001), with collectors articulating that their collections either began in childhood or are reminiscent of past experiences. This is addressed by Poole and Poole in their rhetorical statements regarding the meaning of film posters in relation to their potential as material artefacts to be consumed and collected:

> Does that poster represent a cheap piece of advertising or a key to a future generation's understanding of our present-day society? When you come across a movies poster for a film of bygone years, do you wonder what it was that possessed someone to keep it, or do you suddenly experience the rush of wonderful memories of a movie you saw during happy, carefree times from your past?
>
> (Poole & Poole 1997: 1)

Furthermore, and alongside the themes of this thesis, many alternative movie posters collected have as their subject matter, films which may be considered impactful in parallel with the consumer's childhood experience of these same properties. With this in mind, Baekeland (Pearce, 1994) suggests that childhood experiences can influence preferences towards works of art, a concept which could be expanded further to argue that these early influences could affect all collecting choices. It is also further suggested that the items collected by the individual are used to make sense of their personal histories (Pearce 1994).

These dynamics may shift in later life as adults are seen to initially collect in part to fulfil a manifest desire to 'play' as a subsidiary experience of childhood, but these notions subside as the potential of gaining immortality through a collection becomes a pertinent motivation for most collectors (either implicitly or explicitly), with the concept of 'achieving immortality' forming the final point of Pearce's seventeen motivations for collecting (Pearce 1992). This concept has been detailed previously as part of the circumstances that drive both independent private collection and the potential for individuals to link private collections to public collections, through donations to Museums (Pearce 1992; 1994; Belk 1995; McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004), with many individuals aspiring to the ultimate unquestionable legacy collection bearing their name

(Baekeland 1994). Whereas many individuals may have children to continue their legacy, Baekeland (1994) speaks of one collector who refers to their collection as their child, where the collection fills a void and becomes a legacy of its own, a point echoed by McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004). Belk et al even relate anecdotal evidence where 'some collectors have disinherited their children, finding them to be unworthy of their collections (Cabanne 1961; cited in Belk 1988; 551). Here it is the collection that becomes the premiere legacy of the individual and its 'safety' is paramount in the respect that it beguiles the immortality of the collector. There could be an argument to support the potential of being immortalised within a collection as the collection being imbued with the qualities of the collector. In this regard the collector's identity is derivative of the collection that they possess, and their inherent desire to protect its future, thus giving the collector the ultimate control over their identity and the perception of this identity.

Collecting and Identity

Linking back to the above discussion, Baekeland suggests that: ''it is likely that the preferences of a given collector can be explained by his temperament, his early childhood experience, the nature of his past and present exposure to art, and his financial circumstances'' (Pearce 1994: 212). All of these factors can be clearly associated to the formation and presentation of the personality and identity of the individual collector. Baudrillard previously simplified this further in the statement 'for what you really collect is always yourself' (1968: 5), a concept further supported by Macdonald as 'collecting produces and reaffirms identities' (2010: 95).

Research in this area initially tended to favour anecdotal discussion (Benjamin 1969; Hughes 1984; Tashiro, 1996). Benjamin's seminal essay, '*Unpacking my*

Library' (1969), details his own fascination with book collecting and offered the reader ''some insight into the relationship of a book collector to his possessions, into collecting rather than a collection'' (1969: 59). It is in this statement that the notion of collecting supersedes that of the collection and concepts related to the process of collecting become intrinsic to the identity and social interactions of the collector. This essay reiterates this point from an internal perspective, further establishing that collecting and identity are connected consciously by the collector himself. This emphasises a cultural and sociological importance of the process of collecting to 'self-defined' collectors. This is supported by Pearce in that collecting is utilised to create an individuals own 'unique life story' (1994: 196) where the knowing consumer orchestrates and controls elements of their identity. In this manner a collector of film memorabilia would often identify as a cinephile (Tashiro, 1996).[6] Their collection and possessions allow the individual to elevate their personality towards their own unique goals and understanding of the self. In this regard collections can "only show a picture of ourselves" (Pearce 1994: 202).

This concept of identity and collection can be taken further in that "[i]n a unique sense, our collections are what we are, and from this all our other functions flow" (Pearce 1994:193). This is supplemented in Benjamin's discussions in which he details the memories associated with collecting to be imperative to the process. This ultimate goal of reflection upon a collection not only adds attributional elements to the collector's identity but, as Benjamin implies, reflection also acts as a form of affirmation, giving purpose to the individual. Benjamin states of the collector that:

[6] Though certain collectors of specific film memorabilia may designate themselves as a fan of subject or genre, thus negating an interest in the wider field of film that the term 'cinephile' would presume. Essentially though, these same collectors base their political and societal habits around the growth and display of their embedded investment in film itself.

> For inside him there are spirits, or at least little genii, which have seen to it that for a collection – and I mean a real collector, a collector as he ought to be – ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them
>
> (1969: 67)

The idea that ownership is imperative to the process of identification is further integrated throughout subsequent literature on the subject and founds an important idea in regards as to why collectors collect in order to prescribe and maintain an identity (Belk 1995, Pearce 1997, Martin 1999). This opens a door as to why potential logistical, practical and economic constraints could be re-evaluated in light of adding to and curating a collection. Here the value (economic or otherwise) of a collection, and the desire to obtain, covert and consume, may be directly associable to the character of the collector.

A collection can knowingly be used to define the collector as the collection is often visible[7] and by default will therefore represent the extended self of the individual, as well as their judgements and taste (Belk et al 1988; Stewart 1999). Thus collecting can be an opportunity for an individual to self-define their role away from the politics of work (Baekeland in Pearce 1994, Pearce 1997). Whereas a collector uses this habit to separate work and personal identities, the act of separating the collector and their collection is a more difficult endeavour. In the process of collecting there is a point where there is an assimilation of both object and person, of artefact and collector (Baudrillard 1968: 5). This concept is supported in the consideration that if the authenticity of the collection or an item within the collection is questioned, the collector

[7] Although a collection is often visible as this allows a collector to openly display their acquisitions and identity, not all collections are visible. In particular, those items of a controversial nature are potentially kept stored away. These collections can range from Nazi war memorabilia (Mayo, 1988) to guns (Olmsted, 1988). These collections are still relative to identity but are not considered socially acceptable flaunt.

may become angry (Baekeland in Pearce 1994). This is the result of the fact that the collector and the collection are one in the same and a critique of one is deemed to be a critique of the other. This is supported by Baekland in that a criticism of the collection 'is as if the critic has said, "I don't value you. I don't like anything about you. You are false and worthless" (1994; 216). With relation to this thesis, the realm of instant collectibles has the potential to allow the individual to purchase an element of their identity for a nominal fee. Although this concept lacks exploration, this model is a valuable consideration. Furthermore, where it is argued that a collection shapes the identity of an individual, the argument remains that the individual conscientiously shapes their collection. Therefore, in line with previous arguments, the collection *is* the same as the collector and in this regard, deeper seeded notions as to the psychologies of collecting necessitate further discussion.

The Mindset of the Collector

Jean Baudrillard's opening statements on collecting suggest the normalcy of this process within society. He states, ''Let us grant that our everyday objects are in fact objects of a passion'' (Baudrillard 1968: 1), presupposes the inherent drive of individuals to react to ephemera in a manner that evolves further than simply the specified usage of said item. This potential initial emotional connection could arguably lead to deeper meanings where notions of the self are linked to collecting, desires which fulfil an unconscious discourse (Baudrillard, 1968) relatable to identity. It is in this concept that a collection can also play a crucial role in defining the personality and psychology of the collector (Danet & Katriel 1989; Pearce 1994; Belk 1995).

Pearce's main contributions to the field of collecting studies focus upon collection as a form of meaning making, relatable to the creation of identity for a

collector (individual or institutional). Initially, her focus in the field of Museum Studies led her to identify three main areas of reasoning as to why museums collect and curate a variety of artefacts. These areas are namely collecting as souvenirs (later investigated further by Stewart 1999), collecting as part of fetishized behaviour to covet collections, and collecting as systematic assemblages in what becomes the organisation and curation of artefacts (Pearce 1995). There are a number of occasions where Pearce also discusses the subjective nature of collectors (1994; 1995), where this lack of objectivity can alter the mind-set and decisions of the collector, legitimising their acquisitions.

Notions of creating meanings which are derivative of the collecting process are by no means unique to Pearce. These concepts are found within collecting studies more so than other topics of interest and it is in this statement the question as to why individuals collect is asked. McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004) identify four potential types of collector, each based on separate psychological relationships between the collector and their habits. Firstly, passionate collectors, who are obsessional and emotional. Here the concept of 'price not being an issue' is highlighted, demonstrating that gratification of other values is often paramount against financial outgoings. The second category of inquisitive collectors who often collect as an investment, stressing the importance of economic value, where at the opposing end of the spectrum there lies the Hobbyist collector who collects for the enjoyment of collecting. Finally, Expressive collectors collect as a means of stating who they are. This feeds into notions previously discussed in more detail regarding the connections between identity and the collector. This final variety of collector also collects for a variety of other reasons including profit but also the emotional thrill of acquisition, the pleasure of collecting itself and as a means of self-expression (which could link to desires of

fulfilling creative urges through collecting). These four categories, presented an an attempt to identify the motivations of the collector, raises an issue in regards to any attempt to build a model which is suited to definitive categorisation. In reality, the psychology of the collector, a subjective pursuit to begin with, will cross all of these boundaries. Thus there is a further need to understand the link between the motivations, politics and values assigned through the practice of collecting, all interacting complicity with one another. It is in understanding these values and their importance that this thesis will concern itself in later chapters.

In relation to psychological approaches to the collector, several authors have put forward arguments relating psychoanalytical theory to collecting practice (Baudrillard 1969; Ackerman 1990; Pearce 1995), with Freud himself consistently identified as a passionate collector of various antiquities. His own notions in this field link the drive to collect as being based in childhood and early years development. This concept of the childhood as supremely formative is inherently common to his own intellectual framework outside of comments on collecting and, as a result, this needs to be considered in this original, and perhaps less relevant, context.[8] Although these concepts have been discussed (and have often been discounted) in previous texts, it still seems relevant to mention here as it elucidates the relationship between the collecting process and its associated pathology.

When regarding the psychology of self-affirmed collectors, another clear theme introduced into the study of collecting behaviours is the link between the religious and ritualistic properties which garner the activities of collectors. Baudrillard introduces this

[8] Essentially Freud bound many of his theoretical notions to childhood development, therefore any interest in collecting for him would inevitably be attributed, in some part at least, to this same area of interest. This thesis is not in a position to critique this issue but to simply raise awareness that there could be an element of bias in his views. See for example: *Obsessions and Phobias* (1894) *Three Essays on the Theories of Sexuality* (1905) *The Igo and The Id* (1923) *Neurosis and Psychosis* (1924)

topic as a derivation of the sheer passion of collectors mentioned earlier. This passion, Baudrillard suggests, causes the objects of the collection to be 'looked upon as a thing made by God' (1968: 3). This in a similar manner is further explored by him as he refers to 'the unique object', an item absent from a collection whose symbolic reverence embodies an end goal for the collector. In the exchange of these objects, Appadurai (1994) highlights that for a desired object to be attained it must be obtained through the sacrifice of something else. This can be interrelated to notions of completism which are related to the pathology of collecting and will be discussed shortly. Similarly, ritualistic processes are also seen within the archival and storage processes adopted by collectors (Danet & Katriel 1989), where the items, arranged and ordered, are seen as sacred (Plotz 1999). Linked to this is the potential addictive nature of collecting being linked to the satisfaction of the ritualized process of acquisition (Dannefer 1980; Belk et al 1988; Nordsletten & Cols 2011).

With these examples of questionable ritualistic logic which accompany collecting (Elsner and Cardinal 1994; Belk 1994; Pearce 1995; Tashiro 1996; Dilworth 2003), more logical connotations are often affixed to the process by the individual. Collecting, broadly speaking has been influential in generating social practices, particularly the sharing of interests within a community, and can be utilised by an individual to understand and interact with the social world (Stewart 1993; Dilworth 2003; Macdonald 2010). Here an individual utilises the collection to combat the flux of the politics of his environment (Elsner& Cardinal 1994; Dilworth 2003). This is even more relevant within the contemporary environment of popular culture collecting, where the socioeconomic environment is considered unstable and consumption becomes a further driving force of societal interaction (Belk 1995; Martin 1999).

The social aspects of collecting often revolve around the communities which grow out of certain collecting interests (Belk 1995; Lafferty et al 2014). For some collectors it becomes an intrinsic part of their lifestyle, broadening the contacts of the individual and furthering their opportunities to visit new places in the hope of finding new items of interest (Baekeland 1994; Lafferty et al 2014). In itself, these contacts and experiences offer an element of gratification and, in line with Baekeland's suggestions, can be utilised to combat boredom (1994). Collecting also opens potential avenues for individuals to become an active member of a collecting community (Lafferty et al 2014). Although this will be discussed later, the nature of being a member of a community can justify the collector's interests in the form of 'social profit' (Lafferty et al, 2014) which is the result of social activities generated around the theme of collecting. The notion whereby the nature of collecting facilitates social interaction and the discourse of these actions can be governed by the collections is extended across other texts. Lafferty et al (2014) have offered several supporting figures[9] derived from their research into a community of collectors interested in buying and trading Disney Pins (badges sourced and sold by the Disney company). Within their figures (the result of surveys conducted across community members), the concept of fiscal commitment to the interest is initiated, with substantial proportions of income being spent not only on items but also on attending community events[10]. This begins to highlight the importance of the market within collecting albeit briefly, and as a result adds little depth of analysis and investigation to what could be an important

[9] 57% reported that they collected with close friends and family, while 36% of respondents collected alongside a spouse, and only 7% act alone. Most respondents listed the social aspects of the hobby (attending conventions) as predominant to the pastime. International collectors noted their relationships (some of which were considered lifelong friendships) with worldwide collectors as a result of the collecting community.

[10] 30% of respondents noted spending over $3000 annually on their hobby, with the majority of respondents stating that they spent money on engaging with the hobby outside of the literal purchasing of the collected ephemera.

consideration of the collector's practice. As part of a social understanding of the self, the individual and the community, collecting is also further legitimised in the concept of knowledge generation. This notion can also be the resulting influence of the passion of collecting in regard to the individuals self-affirmed relationship within the community.

Knowledge generation amassed through collecting has been identified as a 'noble' and 'worthwhile' pursuit (Belk 1995, Macdonald 2010), often used to legitimise the collecting process. In this vein Danet and Katriel state that 'the pinnacle of achievement is to have one's collection displayed by a museum' (1989: 256), emphasising the worth of the collection in parallel with the supply of knowledge to a larger audience. This concept is further supported in the argument that collectors can offer more to institutions than their tangible collections as many collectors garner a knowledge and expertise in their specialism beyond that of any external investigators (Martin 1999). Where one may choose to collect items which in themselves may be met with critical distain by gatekeepers, such as some divisions of Popular Culture (Geraghty 2014), gaining broader recognition can instrumentally validate these questionable practices. However, with this 'noble' pursuit of disseminating knowledge and displaying the collection in mind collecting, particularly when considered against contact with a community, can feed aggression and competition. Therefore, although knowledge acquisition surrounding collecting can be seen as a positive, this knowledge can be utilised in defining superiority within a community, where collectors compete as to the 'best collection' (Danet & Katriel 1989; Baekeland 1994; Tashiro 1996; Plotz 1999; Bjarkman 2004). Notions of aggression and collecting are further discussed by Baekeland who identifies two particular types of collector, one who is actively aggressive and competitive, and another exhibits snobbery and by default is more passive aggressive (1994). Both elements in this regard exist purely as a pursuit

of superiority through knowledge generation and in parallel to a community. It is in these actions where several thematic elements of interest resurface. Linked to previous discussions, this type of activity could further provide elements of the identity and psychology of the collector. Also, this competitiveness and drive for superiority may be linked to the concept of the values of collecting in that the value of an individual's collection (and singular items) may be aggressively flaunted (Belk et al 1988) demonstrating not just wealth but also superiority. Understanding the marketplace and being aware of rarity, scarcity and value are all linked to the generation of knowledge and potential community superiority (Tashiro 1996).

Moving back to the concept of social activity promoted through collecting, where there are positive elements of engagement within a community, negative elements may also surface. Linked to these themes is the nature in which collecting (particularly collecting which possesses addictive qualities) can disrupt the spheres of alternative social activity particularly in regard to the collector and their family (Belk et al 1988). As a result Belk (1995) concludes that collecting is often an individual pursuit. That said, Lafferty et al's (2013) research supports the notion that collecting can involve family members and partners, and also considers the concept of social activity increasing via collecting and trading conventions. In reality, the aspects of community and social interaction which revolve around a community are undeniable, but the extent to their influence is at the behest of the collector.

Consumption and the Collector

Discussion surrounding collecting as consumption exists across literature within the field of collecting (e.g. Belk 1988; 1995; Stewart 1993; Pearce 1994). Baudrillard summarises this notion by defining all everyday objects as 'mental precincts over

which I hold sway, they become things of which I am the meaning, they become my property and my passion' (1968: 1). The precedent set here and within subsequent texts emphasises the importance of consumption, ownership and control in the act of collecting. This concept of ownership has been argued to be the result of consumer capitalism, which is readily applied to the study of collecting alongside Marxist philosophies (Appadurai 1994; Belk 1994; Pearce 1995; Martin 1999; Plotz 1999). In advancing this notion Belk focuses on consumption, gaining his perspective from consumer behavioural studies amid notions of collectors being driven to complete their collection, though this does not necessarily deem a collection irrelevant if left incomplete (1998). Of further interest to this thesis is the specific choice of the subjects under investigation to collect movie posters presents a dilemma in that if practice remains broad then completion is inevitably impossible. This is made more-true in that posters of all varieties are continually produced demonstrating a never-ending supply of potential collectibles. Therefore, collectors may seek to categorise their collecting activity and this in turn resonates how they attribute values to practice. More generally speaking then, a collection and the act of collecting is revered as the consumption of similar and interrelated objects (Belk 1982; 1988; 1994) and in consuming and owning interrelated objects, there exists a juxtaposition between the importance of a singular object and its nature to the rest of its counterparts. In Baudrillard's words:

> Gratification flows from the fact that possession depends, on the one hand, on the absolute singularity of each item, a singularity which puts that item on a par with an animate being – and, on the other hand, on the possibility of a series, and hence of an infinite play of substitutions
>
> (1968: 3)

These two concepts in parallel are complimentary, where consumption of a single artefact derives pleasure which is extended in the notion of adding to an existing collection. However, this brings into light a further consideration in regard to consumption where the pleasure derived through consuming can be linked back to notions regarding identity, as each new addition to the collection adds to the projections of the owners own 'narcissism' (Baudrillard 1968). This generates a link to the wider concerns of consumer culture where what an individual chooses to purchase, own and consume, defines them (Belk 1988; 1995: Martin 1999).

The act of consumption is often tied to the concept of ownership when discussing collecting (Danet & Katriel 1989: Baekeland 1994). The act of simply owning the items within a collection has been suggested to lead to feelings of comfort, security and well-being (Baekeland 1994; Martin 1999). Baekeland (1994) goes on to suggest that collecting can make an individual's life more orderly and intelligible, adding structure to their lives. The nature of ownership will also fulfil the need of a collector to partake in the 'sensuous aspects of collecting' (Danet & Katriel 1989: 263), where the handling of an item is permitted through ownership and in this regard a collector can truly consume an item. Danet and Katriel also introduce the theme of 'tension and tension release' that exists within the pursuit to obtain an item of interest which inevitably results in ownership (Danet & Katriel 1989).

Ownership itself has been noted as an absolute necessity for the collector to allow them to feel that they have accomplished their goals (Danet & Katriel 1989). It is in this same notion that completing a collection is relevant to understanding the mindset of the collector. Baudrillard's (1968) discussion surrounding 'the unique object', an item which can symbolise the completion of a collection serves as an illustration of a paradox. The drive of the collector to continue collecting and the need

to offer an element of completion though goal accomplishment (Danet & Katriel 189). This is emphasised in his sentiment that “[o]ne cannot but wonder whether collections are in fact meant to be completed” (Baudrillard, 1968: 6). However, it is possible to question the singularity of the unique object in that collectors may have a number of specific items which complete certain elements of a single collection but leave other pursuits open.

Arguably these concepts are also implicitly referred to in Pearce’s use of the term of ‘Systematic Collecting’, in which a collector will pursue the same or similar items within a predetermined criterion. The consumption of items in this manner is often cited by collectors as a drive to “fill in a gap in the collections” (Pearce, 1994). Therefore, there is a motivation to continue consuming to fulfil notions of the self, psychological aspirations and a need to control, which is contradicted in the notion of ‘filling a gap’ and draw closer to completion. It is in this regard that collectors have been known to forestall the completion of a collection as they fear a life beyond collecting. This is supported in the notion that a collector collects and if there is nothing left to collect then the collector is left void (Belk et al 1988). However, in these instances it is likely that collectors will also move to pursue alternative ephemera in a manner to maintain the habit (Belk et al 1988). This drive to consume to completion or to pursue alternative collections again highlights and supports the idea that within contemporary society consumerism is a commonplace (even necessary) activity (Belk et al 1988; 1995; Martin 1999; Dilworth 2003). Collectors embody this consumer culture and further legitimise these normative activities of consumption further, a concept supported by Dilworth who states:

> The idea that eventually all goods, no matter how mundane, will become valuable and collectible seems to make consumerism more meaningful; we are not simply consumers but potential collectors
>
> (Dilworth 2003: 3)

Dilworth's statement pushes the pursuit of collecting above that of standard consumption through to, and beyond, the concept of economic value, where consumption is not necessarily an end goal but is justified in concepts of 'value'. Here value is traditionally economic but can be further defined and redefined by the collector against other motivations to collect, i.e. identity generation, cultural custodial reverence etc. This highlights a need to further review the concept of collecting alongside the various weights assigned to values, and particularly in relation to the growing concerns of consumer society. Linked to this, Baekeland suggests that some collectors will only purchase an item of interest if they consider it to be a 'bargain' (1994). Notions of 'bargain hunting' are attached by Baekeland to the concept of outsmarting others, but it could be linked to the potential investment and financial reward of acquiring the object in question, while supporting and reinforcing notions related to the generation of knowledge.

It is in the same vein as the psychological aspirations of collectors to both collect and consume with aspirations of adding value to a collection, that we find that the nature in which collections are stored, displayed or archived can be of particular interest. Initially, Baudrillard applies psychoanalytical theory to the concept of losing or damaging a collection as being equivalent to castration. This concept forms the basis to understand why a collector 'locks up and guards' a collection (Baudrillard 1968; 11). Belk et al also refer to a collector whose collection was destroyed by a flood. 'He too, felt destroyed by the flood, as if it had taken a part of him' (Belk et al 1988:

550), in this regard the value of a collection may be considered but these concepts are better associated to earlier claims regarding the collector and their identity.

That said, archival and storage can also be linked to protecting the nature and quality of the items, preserving their cultural value as well as their potential economic value. This can lead to the collector being given ‘’a sense of noble purpose in supposedly generating knowledge, preserving fragile art, or providing those who see it with a richer sense of history’’ (Belk et al 1988), which in turn provides support to the practice of collecting further for the individual. The process of conservation is seen as important to all collectors but is of particular note when considering ephemera that is fragile and degradable, such as those items constructed from paper (Danet & Katriel 1989). It is in these same instances where the manner in which a collection is archived/stored becomes of interest. Many collectors will ritualistically process items in a way to enshrine their sacredness (Belk et al 1988) and Tashiro (1996) takes this one step further indicating that the amount of times a collected item is ‘used’ is not important. The act of ownership and subsequent storage is the goal of some collectors. The concept of storage, although feasibly applied to protection of items for noble reasons and the protection of the identity of the collector, can be also linked to maintaining the potential fiscal values of items and it is this regard that archival is rarely discussed. This notion of economy can also stretch beyond to ask why revere financial values if they are to remain converted by the collector and in this regard other value attachments must be deemed more important. This brings into further question the various values at play within the practice of collecting, a subject the thesis will be concerned with in later chapters. However, economic concerns offer an initial insight into a more practical manner of understanding the importance of literal value and it is therefore sensible to discuss this now, particularly in the light of consumer culture.

The Economies of Collecting

Pearce identifies in her work the relevance of 'value' to collecting, labelling it as a subsection of 'collecting as politics' (1995). However, this is given little attention as other areas of political reverence are investigated in more depth. That said, Pearce (1994) also briefly states the importance of the exchange of collections within the open market. Here, price values can be utilised to reflect the desirability of the collection and this can potentially drive consumption and ownership as addressed previously. As a notion this is left as an aside by Pearce but is an area which has the potential to be discussed further particularly in consideration of the exchange of collectibles relative to differences and fluctuations in price, alongside the notion that for collecting to often occur at all an exchange must take place. Arguably it is Belk's work that is most closely linked to this theme of the economies that surround he consumption of collecting, as he reviews collecting as a form of consumption, and he introduces concepts related to the marketplace of the pursuit of collecting. Yet these issues are lacking depth of discussion regarding the explicit notion of the capital associations of collecting.

Of further interest is the distinction of the term 'value' that further shifts focus from economic and fiscal arguments, and becomes a term utilised across this thesis in relation to *all* legitimising factors surrounding collecting practice, including monetary. The notion of value is interrelated by Pearce (1995) with collecting forming a part of social mechanisms in which 'aesthetic, moral and epistemological values' are given precedence. On this concept of value being separated from worth, Belk et al state that: "Hording items merely for their investment value is not collecting because it invokes a utilitarian reason for the accumulation" (Belk et al 1988: 550). Although Belk is careful

to be mindful of his own distinctions between hoarding and collecting, the disregard of the potential importance of the economies of collecting is still emphasized. A similar issue in this area of study is inadvertently raised by Plotz (1999) who highlights the need to view a collectible away from its perspective in the relation to the marketplace in order to understand its true social value. Although not highlighted in Plotz's work, removing an item from the marketplace can implicitly affect the value and economy of the field in which the item exists as its removal promotes scarcity and this promotes value, when in reality there is an element of harmony across vales, with no single element consistently overshadowing any other, and all aspects influential of one another. Therefore, in the first instance of addressing capital, the notions of economy are bypassed by Pearce, Belk and others, but simultaneously this could be seen to be much more complex than the simplicity of monetary value as the politics of the market and the motivations of the collector can be brought into question.

It is fair to say that the economies of collecting may often be implicit to the study of collecting, but the lack of explicit concern regarding this area has been referred to by Baekeland in that: "it is rather the collector whose motives for collecting are primarily non-monetary that I want to turn my attention'' (1994: 2005). The openness of Baekeland is not common but his principals of research parameters are. Therefore, this is not to critique Baekeland's choice of subject matter but this sentiment illustrates the nature of this area of study. It is indeed a valuable topic of address, but it is the interconnectedness of all values and capital associations that this thesis will concern itself with, providing a platform for potential rumination on the importance of the economics of collecting as a lone topic. Baekeland's essay neglects the financial notions related to collecting for profit which, as a concept, is set aside as lacking importance in regards to how the economics of collecting affect and are affected by,

the psychology of the collector. This is not to question Baekeland's interests but it does emphasise that any rigorous investigation into the values assigned by the collector to their practice has yet to take place. Similarly, this is further emphasised once again by Pearce in the concept that value and worth are secondary aspects to a collectors drive to obtain that which they desire (Pearce 1994), a concept which is potentially questionable as the financial position of the collector is arguably an aspect of the individuals consciousness (Lafferty et al). This same lack of interest is mirrored in the essays found within Elsner and Cardinal's text (1994), where the pathologies and taxonomies of collecting are rarely applied to economies of collecting. In this regard, another issue presented in this area is the concept that financial interest relates to the disposable income of the collector, not the value of the collection and the economies that circulate it (Tashiro 1996: Lafferty 2014). This is linked back to the concept that financial disputes may exist between family members/spouses and the money invested in a collection, not to mention the internal dilemma of how a collector choses to spend their income (Belk 1995: Tashiro 1996), further accounting as to the importance of this topic. More so, speculative value and the utilisation of knowledge for the purposes of collecting as an investment surely marks other traditional notions of capital (cultural and social) at play, thus again emphasising the interrelatedness of the theme.

Inevitably, as Plotz points out, "[c]ollecting's traditional claim that it is exempt from worldly systems-that collecting is done out of the love of collectibles and not at all for the money-is transparently false" (1999: 446). In this regard the monetary value of a collection, for Plotz, is always on the mind of the collector and supports some of the foundations of this thesis. Plotz (1999) continues to infer that a collection, by default, becomes absent from the market but its value does not and will potentially

resurface with an increased value. Following this, the ‘absolute value’ of an object is always in transition. Related to the inherent subjectivity of collecting, the demand for any object acts as a basis for valuation and this value is questioned as to being real value or imagined imbued value (Appadurai 1994), thus influencing the psychologies of the collector regarding economic value, plus other values are in flux and question. This is potentially relatable to the need for collectors to invest in the archival of their collections, not merely to maintain the identity of the collector but also the fiscal value of the collection.

As society becomes enveloped in consumerism, this has led the way for further comments regarding the fiscal value of collections. The credibility of a collection may be tied to its financial security. This in turn legitimises the actions of the collector and the reason for the collection to exist (Danet & Katriel 1989). Furthermore, as the concept of knowledge generation is tied to collecting, knowledge of the marketplace and current value can add to the superiority of the collectors’ position within the market and thus reinforce other capital acquisition. This is inevitably linked to the perspective usefulness of this knowledge within the act of pursuing collecting and furthering consumption. Also, there is an increased ability for individuals to obtain further access to any collectors market via increased transport links and the rise in digital communication. This has led to the argument that “cultural authority resides squarely in the marketplace” (Dilworth 2003: 3) becoming more pertinent and in need of discussion, where the market itself may in fact determine all capital acquisition. Within a consumer culture the notion of buying and selling, taking part in commerce and making investments is seen to serve a culturally valued function. As a result of this a “collector is a valued member of the culture’s economy” (McIntosh and Schmeichel

2004; 87). Within this vein, the concept of a collectors understanding of the marketplace can justify ‘investment opportunities’ for the collector (Tashiro 1996).

Therefore the need to study the capital values, associations and economies of collecting is parallel to understanding the practice of collecting itself. Inevitably it is an area often undervalued within collecting studies but a concern that cannot be ignored as the acquisition of capital remains of interest to the collector and acts as an intrinsic, inescapable part of the process of collecting. Danet and Katriel (1994) briefly refer to Bourdieu in introducing the motivation to collect based on the agent representing class, taste and status, and Appadurai (1994) notes Bourdieu in understanding the economies of gift giving, parallel to collecting and material culture. Most areas of popular collecting are dominated by middle income categories, including stamps (Bryant 1989), baseball cards (Rogoli 1991), model airplanes (Butsch 1984), beer cans (Soroka 1988), and "instant collectibles" such as limited-edition plates (Roberts, 1990). But more than 40 percent of both stamp and coin collectors are white collar, managers, or professionals (Crispell 1988) and fine art collecting is restricted to higher social classes (Marquis 1991; Moulin 1987). Bourdieu (1984) attributes this bias not only to income but to "taste cultures" and the possession of "cultural capital" by the dominant social classes who in turn assure that their children are more likely to possess such knowledge and taste (see Halle 1993).

Pearce (1995) discusses the habitus in parallel to collecting, briefly linking Bourdieu’s comments on material possessions to collecting practice as a method to demonstrate capital acquisition relative to taste. However, this is left lacking in expansion and generally capital remains distinctly absent in collecting studies as a definitive consideration of collecting practice. Economics is simple to interpret, but what of other values and ultimately their own value. It is in this notion that, Bourdieu’s

definitions and discussions could be a fruitful method to adopt in line with further interpretation and understanding of the interplay between capital and the pursuit of collecting. This approach will be integral to this thesis as to have any kind of value, items must be determined worthwhile by the individual, the market and wider society. Bourdieu's thinking tools, specifically in line with his notion of taste, will illuminate this concept of justifying collecting in the first instance, then the use of capital associations to back the practice in the second. Although we have started with a specific review of economic capital, and it is worth noting Rush's comments that: "it is doubtful, however, whether collectors have ever been unmindful of the investment value of art (1961: vii). Yet, opening a discussion surrounding money/finance is only the first stage in readdressing the balance and play between various forms of capital acquisition from the perspective of the collector.

To close the review, and to lead onto the next chapter, collecting actions surrounding film and cinema have received some limited attention from academia, much of which will be further introduced throughout the thesis. Poole and Poole's (1997) text focuses on providing an illustrated guide to, and of, collecting movie posters but reveals little as to the motivations of the collector. Klinger (2006) notes the allure of nostalgia to film collectors, while also referring to the impact of new technologies of what can be collected and how it can be obtained, paying note to Tashiro's (1996) essay surrounding video collecting (where he comments as to the obsessiveness of some video collectors). While the motivations to collect are still left unexplored, Klinger does utilise this practice to further understand the importance of film to the individual through her study of the cinephiles attention to 'home cinema'. More recently nostalgia as a driving force behind VHS collecting in the digital age has

been outlined but again does not delve into the motivations of the film collector and how they interpret their practice (Herbert 2017). Kate Egan (2007) has added depth to the discussion in her review of those individuals who collect ‘video nasties’, delving into the taxonomy of collections, and the relationship between culture and personal meanings bound to the practice. While Egan has pushed this subject forward, the overall lack of distinct review of film collecting as an independent topic of interest, and the reasoning attached to these practices, determines a gap in the literature which this thesis will contribute toward.

Chapter 3 – Engagement, Excitement, and eCommerce

The Popular Culture Collector and The Virtual Turn

This chapter focuses on the value placed on popular culture and, more specifically, film, within the lifestyles and identities of individuals, with the popular culture collector providing an interesting opportunity for study. There needs to be an implicit understanding that these subject areas are important to 'fans', and that these elements become implemental in initially entering the AMP field for the collector, as well as influencing strategy as to what film properties are valuable both subjectively to the collector and objectively within the wider community. Many AMPs represent historic[1] films and, along with their illustrative production values, embody nostalgic connotations that are often found in fan activities and collecting practices.

> All popular audiences engage in varying degrees of semiotic productivity, producing meaning and pleasures that pertain to their social situation out of the products of the cultural industries. But fans often turn this semiotic productivity into some form of textual production that can circulate among – and thus help define – the fan community
>
> (Fiske 1992: 30)

While Fan Studies represents a vast and fruitful area of study (Jenkins 2012), certain strands of interest are useful in understanding elements of the pop culture collector, notably that of fan identity generation (McCain, Gentile and Campbell 2015; Chadborn, Edwards and Reysen 2017; Miller 2017; Vermaak 2019). Consumption of popular culture in all forms aids the individual in defining who they are and who they wish to be, with notions of a person being pertinently invested in popular culture constantly

[1] Meaning film that is not necessarily a new release, where iconic cinema, cult classics and fan favourites can all receive the 'AMP treatment'.

shifting more towards a mainstream and acceptable pursuit (Duffett 2013). This is often relative to community practices (Hills 2002; Jenkins 2012) coinciding with a movement of these activities to the online space (Booth 2010), with collecting practices similarly altering against the backdrop of digital transition of community and commercial activity. Film, broadly speaking, acts as an anchor for individuals who consider themselves a 'film fan', to understand and elaborate such identity centric practices. Therefore the link between collecting AMPs and fan activity surrounding popular culture, particularly cinema, is relevant to this thesis, where AMPs facilitate fan identifies in their growth and maintenance.

Although the motivations for collecting discussed in the previous chapter remain relatively consistent over time, the manner and method of collecting in some instances has shifted in parallel with the rise of digital technology. From specialised websites, to second-hand selling platforms and auction sites, to dedicated forums for collectors to communicate with like-mined individuals as well as enter the marketplace, there are multiple ways collectors can take part in consumption activity online which would have been impossible prior to the age of the internet and its subsequent involvement in commerce and daily life within the developed world (Reynolds 2000; Lee 2001; Dickens 2010; Grefen 2010). This shift has generated a market platform that is: relatively free to enter for both businesses and consumers, allows for the transfer of knowledge regarding product information, adds transparency to the economies surrounding collectibles, and offers collectors the opportunity to immediately search, find and purchase an item missing from their collection with relative ease. The AMP represents a contemporary topic of collecting practice and an understanding of such changes can be met with understanding practices revolving around their collection. Although a problematic area to fully address given the vastness and constant flux of

technology (Reynolds 2000), the practices of eCommerce as understood currently are still significant to collecting practices. This is particularly true after what de Groot (2009) refers to as 'The Virtual Turn', where the acceptance of digital technology into our domestic, business and social lives has become normalised within these spaces, where the internet has become intrinsic to economic and social activity around the World.

This chapter will discuss these changes, placing them in parallel with collecting materials associated with popular culture, particularly film, an area which has seen substantial growth in recent years. This has resulted in a burgeoning marketplace, as the interest in pop culture ephemera has further matured and found its audience (Hughes 1984; Geraghty 2014). This is a buoyant market, not only items with historic provenance (dating back over the past century) but also for 'instant collectibles'. Those items produced with an intended inherent quality to be 'collected'. Understanding how they have generated a platform for capital exchange surrounding popular culture artefacts further frames both the relevance of the discussion to follow and locates it within a contemporary setting. Fans are "often avid collectors, and the cultural collection is a point where culture and economic capital come together" (Fiske 1992: 43) and the motivations for collecting pop culture are broadly similar in the most part for any collector, but with several exceptions, mainly that nostalgia plays a more central role as an incentive for practice. Market practices are often now facilitated online and this is further combined with notions of how fans engage with one another across digital communities where buying, selling and trading all act in parallel with broader discussions regarding the products of popular culture, fan/audience engagement in the consumption of these texts/artefacts and the sharing of fan

creations (Fan Fiction, Fan Art, Cosplay etc.). This gives rise to a highly motivated audience spread across multiple niche interests, who all have the potential to engage in community activities including, but not limited to, collecting. Inevitably, pop culture is gaining traction in regards to collecting activities as the viability and availability of relevant ephemera grows alongside popular culture itself. As an area it still retains the characteristics that disassociate it from more traditional areas of (more reputable) collecting, where items are deemed to have historical, social or cultural value that is held in higher esteem, often dictated through those members of society who hold the power and authority to assign 'importance', such as museums, wealthy private collectors, experts and academics (Quinn et al 2018). Therefore the subject of value and validity based on demonstrating the wider interest in the area as both a market and as an academic pursuit will be discussed here, an area of interest which is likely to continue as the growth in popularity of the field from the masses dictates not only its relevance but also its burgeoning respectability as a topic of value.

Popular Culture in Brief

The history and origins of 'popular culture' have been well documented and discussed (Storey 2006; Burke 2009; Fiske 2010) with the general consensus agreeing it is culture consumed by the masses, distinct from what could be termed high or official culture yet no less valuable politically speaking to said consumers (Storey 2006). The boundaries between low culture (folk culture, working class culture etc.) through popular culture (which takes a central position in the chain, sitting in parallel with mass culture/dominant culture), and into high/elite culture (Nachbar and Lause 1992; Storey 2006) often overlap. Many examples of texts once considered either popular culture or high culture have subsequently shifted the position that they adopt. For example,

the serial work of Charles Dickens was initially produced and distributed in a manner similar to contemporary popular culture (comic books, superhero film franchises etc.). Yet Dicken's work has shifted into the field of high culture over its lifespan (Storey 2006). This suggests that texts may simply rely on the passage of time to generate provenance, though this would neglect the many other examples of historical popular culture which are now forgotten.

Individuals elect to build elements of their identity around consuming popular culture, where the audience can associate on a personal level due to its contemporariness, integrating them into the self, utilising this action to aid societal interactions (Browne et al 1972; Hughes 1984; Brummett 2014). Nachbar et al (1992) offer a further deconstruction of the term where 'popular' refers to that which has been accepted by the general public while simultaneously implying that there is an element of choice in what is and is not considered and accepted as 'popular' by the very nature of it becoming accepted by a mass audience. Mass acceptability of such a thing has generally placed popular culture under the shadow of what Bourdieu might consider 'bad taste', as a result its continual devaluation by higher society (historically deemed to retain the power to determine taste) (Bourdieu 2010; Quinn et al 2018). Essentially popular culture lacks taste in that it is by default 'popular' (lacking cultural scarcity/rarity), where high culture avoids mass appeal (Bourdieu 1979), associated traditionally with the 'social elite' (Delaney 2007: 6) and bound to academia and intellectualism (Vanhanen 2017). Yet while popular culture may often be tarred by this critical assumption, there have been definitive shifts in perception (Gans 1974; Delaney 2007; Berger 2017; Massi, Piancetelli and Pancheri 2019), and of note is the use of Bourdieu's own theoretical constructs in studying these topics, assigning them a higher cultural esteem (Couldry 2003; Hesmondhalgh 2006).

Inevitably any definition covers an almost impossible limit of potential examples, with Browne (1972) noting that popular culture has existed nearly as long as documented history, encompassing multiple examples from the Greek Tragedies to the plays of Shakespeare, from the Beatles to Batman. Defining popular culture inevitably proves difficult as it "is in effect an empty conceptual category, one which can be filled in a wide variety of often conflicting ways depending on the context of use" (Storey 2006: 1). In relation to this thesis, popular culture generally adopts a position towards the 'lowbrow' side of the cultural sliding scale, a victim of its own popularity which results in it being often met with elitist distain regarding societal and cultural value/significance, particularly when approached from a bourgeois perspective (Bourdieu 2010; Holmes and Looseley 2017; Rossel, Schenck and Weingartner 2017). Popular cinema/film, the subject matter bound to the majority of AMPs, represents a product of popular culture often associated with the same sweeping definitions applied to lowbrow texts (Cline and Weiner 2010; Toepoel 2011).

Popular Culture, Film, Collecting and Identity

Although mass audiences consume popular culture and media on a daily basis, cinema often takes a different, yet consistent role in the lives of many individuals (Staiger 2005), where a significant number of this audience move beyond simple acts of consumption to identify themselves as 'fans' of film. Consistent themes across fan studies revolve around fans utilising media products to better understand and develop their position within culture and society. Fandom allows individuals to build and be part of communities, interpret gender and sexuality, provide purpose within their lives and, perhaps most importantly to the present discussion, it can influence and define their identities (Jenkins 1992; Zubernis and Larsen 2012; Kuhn and Westwell 2012; Duffet

2013; Williams 2015). It is in this generation of one's identity that collecting as a practice offers a logical means of controlling elements of the self. Jenkins (2017) discusses fandom alongside the collector who often utilises their practice to form aspects of identity, to encourage connections and conversations with others, further their interests/passions and find gratification in their mastery over a subject, concepts which are replicated in many of the activities that come to define what a 'fan' is. Therefore, collectors are also fans, both of the subject matter and the act of collecting (Geraghty 2014; Jenkins 2017). Geraghty (2014) also suggests that where fan studies is well-documented, the study of collecting has not received the same level of interest, particularly when considering the collector as fan. As a result, discussions surrounding fan identities (Mackay 1997; Dickens 2010; Chadborn, Edwards and Reysen 2017; Miller 2017) form a useful foundation for the development of the motivations associated with collecting popular culture.

Mackay notes that "in postmodern accounts, cultural consumption is seen as being the very materials out of which we construct our identities: we become what we consume" (1997: 2), identifying the link between identity and the media individuals choose to engage with. The materials we collect to furnish our homes and integrate into our characteristics, mannerisms and appearances, act as expressions of the self, where individuals enunciate fandom through such means (Hills 2012). Displaying popular culture artefacts allows the individual to physically demonstrate the relationship between their identity and popular culture texts (Geraghty 2014). This practice has become increasingly popular in the last thirty years as a growing section of society who connect with popular culture (Clarke 2001) find themselves with more disposable income and choice of artefact than previous generations (Harris 1998).

Jenkins (2017) explores the way that fans of comics identify as such, and that a reader of comics can be understood in terms of who they are and what they value by an 'outsider', their taste demarcating identity to the beholder (Bourdieu 1979). In essence we identify with what we consume (comics, films, television, music, toys, etc.) and we often display these interests physically, either through fashion, conversation or, more commonly, literal display of these objects within the home. In Bourdieu's terms these types of practice demonstrate (and are facilitated by) capital, mainly economic, cultural and subcultural. In identifying in this way, others can understand elements of who the individual is through the individual deliberately elected to identify as a consumer of popular culture, representing their accumulated capital through their choices to collect, display and ultimately, demonstrate (Thornton 1995). This is a trait of collectors in general who not only identify as 'collectors' but offer a specific description in relation to what it is that they collect/consume, narrowing characteristics to generate a specialised identity (Moist and Banesh 2013). All collectors of popular culture ephemera similarly create and demonstrate their identity as collectors, including record/vinyl collectors (Shuker 2010), VHS Collectors (Staiger 2005; Bjarkman 2014) and Toy Collectors (Geraghty 2014). individuals can find meaning in popular culture which they connect to notions of identity (McCracken 1988), and a collection of related ephemera can solidify this connection, reinforcing said notions of identity. In effect:

> Fans that collect Hollywood memorabilia do so to both recreate the illusion and break it down; they wish to be part of Hollywood history and seek to redefine it by amassing a collection that represents considerable financial investment and signifies their own cultural capital
>
> (Geraghty 2014: 33)

Capital becomes intrinsic to the identity of the collector as their investment is valuable in reinforcing who they are, with cultural capital being the derivation of economic investment and vice versa, essentially resulting in a fan using their purchasing power to increase their cultural capital against popular culture texts. This topic is of relevance to this thesis and while Geraghty does connect capital and collecting, the interplay between the various forms of capital and practice requires further focus.

The history of popular culture collecting runs in parallel with the rise of mass production itself, particularly across the latter half of the 20th Century up to the present day. This time period represents a progression in popular culture itself, the sheer number of examples growing exponentially alongside advancements in home entertainment opportunities. The passage of time inadvertently leads to more ephemera, as more artefacts are created while adding to the previous examples which continue to exist. Similarly, as film and television grow in accessibility, there exists a naturally simultaneous rise in the production of media itself, adding to the growth 'popular culture'. Merchandising, movie tie-ins, and related and endorsed products all become easier to produce alongside increases in industrial ability, and become viable sources of profit as demand grows alongside the supplementary increases mentioned. These products are often affordable for both producer and consumer, meaning collecting these items continues to become a very accessible pursuit (Hughes 1984).

The Instant Collectible

While many popular culture 'collectibles' can be defined in Hughes' terms as "items originally produced to serve a solely utilitarian purpose that subsequently become, through intense collector interest, objects that transcend mere utility" (1984: 4), including posters, lobby cards, and other forms of advertising or propaganda, there is

a further distinction made between these items and those Hughes later defines as ‘instant collectibles’.

These are items produced with the function of simply being ‘collectible’, designed to embody an ultimately artificial[2] allure targeting the motivations that drive an individual to take part in collecting activities. They still have a potential utilitarian function in the same manner all objects must when we consider them at their most basic, but a significant aspect is their paramount objective is to be consumed through collection[3] (Blom 2004). Where Hughes’ does briefly mention the market for instant collectibles, he quickly dismisses it as irrelevant to the discussion of popular culture collecting, understandable given that traditionally these items were poor quality and lacked the collectible ‘soul’ of items with real provenance. However, this contradicts the popularity of these items to popular culture collectors in recent years, particularly in regards to the subject matter of this thesis, namely AMPs. Hughes also states that a collectible has to receive ‘intense collector interest’, which could be misconstrued in that it must be well received by a large audience, particularly as he goes on to state that “mass interest is needed to transform an object from functional to collectible” (1984: 7). To dismiss instant collectibles, many of which do retain a passionate fan base, seems irrational giving further reason to discuss this topic in the light of a changing marketplace which has become increasingly accessible due to the rise of eCommerce.

[2] Although this can be contested in that it is no longer an artificial quality if these products are indeed desirable to collectors.

[3] There are examples where it could be argued that design determines purpose, posing the potential argument that the utilitarian function of the object is to be collectible e.g. an AMP, or a Funko toy, or a limited-edition action figure). That said, given that the basis for the creation of these examples very much relies on a different functionality (a poster as communication, and toys to play with) it is fair to note that these retain some element of this ‘utility’.

There are several elements here to address when discussing modern collecting and contemporary popular culture collectibles, and Hughes' arguments against these points are likely linked to the age of his book (published in the mid 1980s), prior to the relative explosion in popular culture collecting, alongside the introduction of a superior calibre of instant collectible examples of which will be introduced later in the chapter. Regarding the lack of reverence towards 'instant collectibles', Hughes notes that by 1979 most national publications were carrying several advertisements per issue for objects such as plates, statues, figurines, silver ingots, and medals. For Hughes the problem with all of these items is that they are "not really collectibles" (1984: 15), again contestable given that a market definitively exists for these items to be bought and collected by individuals. These collectors are still governed by the same motivations and gain the same gratification that dictates all worthwhile collecting activities.

This initial saturation of the market represents a broad and sweeping attempt by various businesses to exploit the interest in collecting that became more apparent across the 60s and 70s. As this marketplace has matured, so has the understanding of the producer and consumer, meaning that more targeted items fulfil a desire for the audience beyond simply buying for the sake of collecting something. Whereas Hughes' examples of instant collectibles were ignored due to their lack of a 'collectible soul', their contemporary counterparts found across popular culture collecting signify deeper meaning to the individual. These items are now often almost 'custom made' (many are literally custom made) to utilise the allure of artisanal product, allowing the collector to enunciate and justify fandom, while encompassing elements of nostalgia (Pearce 1994; Belk 1995 ; Geraghty 2014).

Instant collectibles, along with items that have become collectible, now share these same qualities that drive collector engagement. As this thesis focuses on

collecting limited edition AMPs, which in themselves embody qualities akin to 'instant collectibles', it important to establish this area as a viable, valuable and meaningful subject, as motivations and methods for collecting seemingly now transcend across products and provenance. While the rise of eCommerce and the global digital marketplace for exchange (buying, selling and trading collectibles) will be discussed further in the chapter, this has initially impacted the collectors ability to source niche collectibles, both former utilitarian items and those which are 'instant collectibles'. In modern society if anyone has the desire to collect objects linked to popular culture, if they have access to digital technology and enough economic capital, they are likely to be able to source what it is they have chosen to collect with relative ease[4].

Examples of Pop Culture Instant Collectibles

Therefore, popular culture collecting can be broadly split between mass produced, often historic items of interest and collectibles (instant collectibles). Although cases of ephemera are wide-ranging, the following examples have been chosen to highlight the characteristics of the instant collectible demonstrating the dissonance between the two areas. This is helpful in understanding what the AMP represents as an instant collectible, as opposed to a 'historic' film poster. To begin, the tradition of dolls/action figures presents a lucrative area of collecting potential. Broadly speaking, examples such as Barbie (est. 1959) and GI Joe (est. 1964) have been desirable to collectors at both the point of sale and beyond. Originally a toy marketed at a child audience, these examples subsequently became pop culture icons in their own right spawning a variety of films, TV shows, comics, books and video games,

[4] With the caveat that some highly desirable items may still be harder to obtain given their scarcity and obscurity

paving the way for other successes and movie tie-ins such as Kenner's *Star Wars* (dir. George Lucas 1977) line and *Batman's* (dir. Tim Burton 1989) saturated merchandising campaign, cementing the potential of popular culture merchandising and the mass production of figures for a demanding audience. Given this desire from the market, companies such as McFarlane Toys (est. 1994), overseen by comic artist and entrepreneur Todd McFarlane[5], introduced toys that were above market price but considerably better quality, particularly in terms of construction and realism. Better quality not only generated product differentiation from competitors but also allowed the individual (often adult) to justify their interest and purchase of these figures as 'high quality collectables' (Heljakka 2017). This concept of justification through quality will be discussed in later chapters, with the overriding idea that these qualities can offset the previously mentioned concept that instant collectibles lack provenance and 'soul'. McFarlane Toys also provide a relatively unique concept in that their production lines stretch into other fields such as sports memorabilia as well as comics, film and television, exploiting the drive and desire from fans, collectors and individuals from a wider arena of what would naturally be defined as popular culture.

McFarlane Toys also produced (and continue to produce) limited-edition figures priced at a much higher premium (against other dolls), where the fact that an individual seeks out these items and is willing to purchase at a higher price solidifies the concept that the fan collector takes their area of consumption seriously, desiring to own figures which legitimately represent their interests and area of fandom[6]. Regardless of how they may be branded, they are not considered toys to the collector, and that they are 'limited' supports this distancing from plaything and into collectible. These products

[5] McFarlane, known for his work in the 80s and 90s on The Amazing Spiderman comics went on to form Image Comics and their most notable character, Spawn.

[6] The potential speculative increase is price could also factor into this desire to collect, but this in turn reinforces the point if it sold to a collector for an even higher pricepoint.

specifically target the adult market - and as the desirability of this demographic became more evident to producers, other manufactures were prompted to deliver similar marketable items. Barbie's collaboration with Bob Mackie across the 1990s for example, targets a more discerning collector of the dolls and marks a shift towards acknowledging the burgeoning demand for 'special' figures for adult collectors. These same collectors may have been introduced to Barbie at a more formative age, and the combination between nostalgic desires, fan interest, and a product that imbued reminiscent qualities associated with their childhood (Belk and Wallendorf 1994; Heljakka 2017), has been meticulously exploited from fans.

Current example of producers and distributors of figures include Sideshow Collectibles (est. 1993) and Hot Toys (est. 2000), who produce high quality pop culture figurines which are often collected, coveted, limited edition, and notably valuable (both personally and economically). This brief overview of the action figure/doll market emphasises the value found in the popular culture market for both collectors/fans and producers. It demonstrates how the market has shifted to a more adult collector (Heljakka 2017), praying on nostalgic tendencies, which themselves drive consumption in support of identity generation, and that 'instant collectibles' can be coveted and desirable amongst a growing adult collector base (Heljakka 2017). This concept of nostalgic drive transcends multiple 'collectible' boundaries, not just relevant to the toy market, but to film memorabilia, sports, music, etc., where Baudrillard's postmodern notions of Simulacra and Simulation (1994) are a useful device in deconstructing motivations for nostalgic connections through the use of something such as a toy/action figure/doll. Here the artefact represents a bridge to an artificial past, where the pleasure of this history is integral to the enjoyment of the object. For example, positive associations built around play linked to a particular action figure are

reappropriated for adult consumption, with elements such as limiting an edition size[7] (Heljakka 2017), increasing quality and a higher price point further placing the item in the context of the Simulacra while also elevating the authenticity and value of the item in relation to its nostalgic capability. .

Toys, along with special edition VHS/DVDs, film posters, and fashion accessories are all examples of what could fall into the near limitless category of film-centric popular culture collectable. To demonstrate this, the production and release of Nike's 'Nike Mag' (Nike Air Mag) official replica sneakers as worn by Michael J. Fox in *Back to the Future 2* (dir Robert Zemeckis 1989) relate to a different element of material culture emphasising the same instant collectible characteristics. Referred to as 'The Greatest Shoe Never Made' (Richard 2011) and originally designed by revered Nike creative Tinker Hatfield, the 2011[8] release of the shoe to the public demonstrates an awareness that popular culture ephemera is a lucrative marketplace built of engaged fan consumers. This is further relevant here as a case study as not only were the sneakers produced in a limited edition (1500 pairs plus 10 further pairs contained within exclusive packaging), but they were only made available online via eBay, demonstrating the insurgence of the digital marketplace and the naturalness in which it is utilised to bring collectors and ephemera together.

The Nike Mags, sold on average for between $2,500 and $10,000 dollars, raising a total of $4.7m for the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. Aside from the charitable nature of the sale, these figures illustrate the economic value of popular culture artefacts ascribed by fan collectors, further supported in that the

[7] Where as Baudrillard utilises his concept of the Simulacra to justify the general acceptance of mass produced items devoid of their original influence, the concept of a limited edition collectible still retains these qualities to the point of it not only being proxy to the creation of said object, but actually integral as a distinctive feature. It is no longer a doll, it is now a collectible.

[8] A further limited edition version of the show was released in 2016, complete with self-tying laces.

same sneakers can be found on eBay today for prices often exceeding $5,000 (eBay 2019). The vast prices, combined with an exponential resale value based on no previous record of similar produce demonstrates the various interplay of capital bound to the sneakers, where economic capital, and cultural/subcultural capital (Bourdieu 1986; Thornton 1995) bound to the limited number produced, act as the markers of the fans perceived association with the text. These sneakers elevate the owners status beyond that of a conventional fan of the movie due to the rarity and cost to obtain such an item. This overlap of capital will be instrumental to the chapters to follow in deconstructing not only how an individual can justify collecting habits but also in legitimising various values to the collector within a wider sphere of general interest. The Nike Mags ultimately emphasise that an Instant Collectible can be deliberately crafted to contain motivational triggers for the fan collector, in its material qualities and its manner of distribution.

Pop Culture Identity and Colleting

The availability of popular culture ephemera allows the collector to tangibly consume the media texts they associate with, strengthening the relationship between text and fan and encouraging its integration into an individual's identity. Effectively "consumer goods are bridges to [our] hopes and ideals. We use them to recover this displaced cultural meaning to cultivate what is otherwise beyond our grasp" (McCracken 1988: 104). It is inherent in the tangibility of these items which is important for the collector, allowing them to physically fashion these 'bridges', their actions being "very much bound with their self-fashioning" (Staiger 2005: 21). Consuming ephemera becomes integral in shaping the collectors identity, the significance of which is determined by the individual themselves as they choose what to consume, how much

to consume and the relative effect of this consumption in their actions to follow. What is consistent across film is that the individual is met by a relatively unique situation where the fan collector (and fan more broadly) is victim to film's ethereal nature (Bjarkman 2004), resulting in a desire for the individual to consume related physical artefacts. This is facilitated by VHS cassettes in Bjarkman's (2004) case but this is easily transferable to all film related examples of collections, where an item is taken from its original context (utilitarian or instant collectible), becomes collected and coveted, and is ultimately 'redefined in terms of the collector' (Elsner and Cardinall 1994:).

Tangibility becomes intrinsic to the building of elements of fan identity, initially allowing the collector to display these objects within the domestic space for the benefit of visually representing identity (Jenkins 2017). Ownership of these items also allows the collector to demonstrate control over what enters and exits the collection, how it is arranged, presented and stored (Bjarkman 2004), requiring a systematic thought process, the selectivity of which is representative of an ideology of understanding of one's identity (Staiger 2005). The collector can effectively take mass produced popular culture products and, through adding them to their collection, transform them into something unique and personal to the individual. They are linked to the collection, it represents them, their interests and their passions.

Klinger (2006) believes that film centred collecting practice was expedited by the rise in home video. The cinephile from decades previous, who spent time and money on attending the cinema or similar settings to continually consume film, has not been 'obliterated' but reshaped through their assembly of an 'extensive media library' alongside a rise in 'commodity culture' (2006: 56). This led to a general practice where the consumption of texts is commonplace, and the various values assigned to these

items is politically assessed by the consumer or, in our case, the collector. VHS provided an available tangible notion of consumption, something which was previously lacking in film and, to a lesser extent, television. It is in this manner that “these industries have had a dramatic impact on defining films as collectibles in the marketplace and on shaping their reception in the home” (Klinger, 2006: 57), subsequently moving beyond this to the collecting of other related ephemera. Although the film aficionado may have always gathered materials of interest (posters, lobby cards, autographs), the advent of home video (VHS, DVD etc.) allowed the individual to efficiently collect an element of the media itself.

This expectance has led to the demand for other related ephemera to grow, both for historic items of interest and instant collectibles (Geraghty 2014). This has shifted further in the modern era alongside the rise in digitisation and streaming facilities, resulting in multiple ways in which fans/collectors can engage with the products of film, while diminishing the ability to tangibly interact with it. Therefore, individuals who identify as film fans, who wish to gather objects to bring into the domestic space and highlight/control elements of their identity, may find their collecting pursuits have also shifted, but their motivation remains the same. Crafting identity through collecting physical artefacts is an important aspect of practice, where tangibility facilitates the bridge between collector and film (Booth 2010). Similarly, a further motivator previously mentioned can be found in the nostalgia one associated with film, a concept which also creates a void between experiences and longing for an idealised past, narrowed through the collection of material culture.

Nostalgia, Popular Culture and Collecting

Nostalgic experience as a product of film consumption has gained significant traction across academia in the last two decades, where nostalgic audience engagement with film has been discussed in line with consumption motivations (Dika 2003; Cook 2005; Cashman 2006). It is considered a common phenomenon which the majority of the general public has experienced in some format relative to the practices of media engagement (Cook 2005; Dwyer 2015) and one exploited by popular culture which demonstrates a significant amount of often artificially constructed desirable connections to the past within its production values (Cassidy 2008). The production and distribution of a film can inevitably and profoundly represent its own era (Cook 2005, Dwyer 2015), giving it a permeance within time and history, with production elements such as settings, themes, directors and actors, all further demarcating the historical point of release. Film can also be produced with the motivation to instigate nostalgia through setting, dialogue, direction and costume. In both cases the audience can utilise the viewing experience to elicit nostalgic experience, and engagement with such texts can further influence elements of identity (Cook 2005; Church 2015).

Films can therefore be associated with the individuals own past as seen on the screen but, on a more personal note for the audience, film can be relatable to the experience they had/have regarding their literal engagement with the movie, either for the first time or across subsequent viewings, where the experience of viewing itself acts as the catalyst for nostalgic memories when the same film is rewatched. For the audience nostalgia is "predicated on a dialectical between longing for something that has been lost, and an acknowledgement that this idealised something can never be retrieved in actuality, and can only be accessed through images" (Cook 2005: 4). In many instances this 'longing' is a welcomed experience, a chance to ruminate beyond

ones ‘day to day’ life, where film facilitates this transportation. Engaging with nostalgic longing through film, popular culture and collecting, allows an individual to further control their present through reappropriation of these ideals against their current situation (Dwyer 2015). In the case of this thesis, collecting related ephemera bridges this gap offering a permanent solution to their ‘longing’ for a connection to the past.

Cook (2005) pinpoints the rise in digital technology is producing an ever-growing virtual world, and therefore generating a greater desire amongst audiences to find an element of ‘authenticity’ in the media they consume, including those examples designed to elicit nostalgia. The irony of producing ‘authentic’ nostalgia cinema is not lost but can sufficiently engage an audience in a narrative which is based in the real world, free from our present virtual existence, and through the lens of a history which is fondly reflected upon. This desire for authentic connectivity to the past through film, and to connect to film more generally, is further accentuated in the collecting of physical artefacts, given their inability to exist virtually and there lucrative quality to simply be ‘real’.

Consuming Nostalgia

Therefore, consuming film can be relatable to consuming nostalgia, and so too can the activity of collecting. As Banash states, “to become a collector, or at least to see oneself in the image of the collector, is to engage profoundly with the past and the energies of nostalgia” (Banash 2013: 63). Generally, the objects collected, particularly those which the individual considers ‘souvenirs’, embody nostalgic qualities. To possess them is to relieve the dissonance between the present and the want to recover an ideological past, where connecting with the object will bring this past physically closer to the individual (Stewart 1993; Jenkins 2017). Collecting allows an individual

to connect with, and reconstruct, their own past (Belk 1995), selecting those items which often encompass positive associative qualities and further lessen the sense of longing associated with the one's own history (Holbrook 1993). Collecting film and television ephemera combines a desire for collecting with the memories the audience associates with the respective film, either their viewing experience (personal history), the film's ability to mediate the past, or both. This is further relevant to fans in the present day as they 'increasingly reflect upon the historicity of these texts as objects whose value becomes inseparable from inflection by nostalgia' (Church 2015: 3). For Geraghty (2014) the interest fans have in collecting and engaging with popular culture ephemera is related to triggering the same positive associations and memories of the media as "partextual signifiers of the original viewing experience" (2014: 40). In essence, fans may be further susceptible to foster the nostalgic influence of their consumption practices, and ownership of ephemera further elicits, encourages and supports the nostalgic values of the connection between individual, interest and object. While nostalgia (or perhaps more appropriate is the search for nostalgia) is not the only reason to collet popular culture ephemera, it does underpin the majority of the associable collecting practices, either as a driving force or as a welcome subsidiary factor.

Similar to film, material objects bound to popular culture also act as vehicles for nostalgia, both through their literal physical history, but also in terms of the original media product that they represent (i.e. a particular film) and the memories one associates with this (Staiger 2005). For example, an original movie poster has a history as a piece of marketing material, but if that poster advertises say, *Casablanca* (dir. Michael Curtiz 1942), then that film's own history and cultural reception is also embedded within the poster. These objects carry the past into the present and beyond,

retaining their importance to the collector in regards to not only identity generation but also their memories, gifting the collector the ability to romanticize about the past, a past which they may not have ever been part of but wish to reminisce (Staiger 2005). In this instance there becomes a need to gather objects in order to collect, create and strengthen memories, which in itself goes to support just how significant the impact of popular culture can be to the individual if they seek to collect its souvenirs and reappropriate them as their own. In essence:

> Popular culture is made meaningful through memories; fan culture is not commodified but personalised. Memories are essential to the production of subjectivity therefore the memories embedded within collections of toys, merchandise and collectibles are emblems of the self, markers of identity and symbolic of the cultural capital that fans accumulate in their life long engagement with a media text
>
> (Geraghty 2014: 4)

Collectors of film ephemera may find that they collect the same subgroups of items (i.e. multiple posters) or multiple variable items (replica props, Steelbooks, posters, memorabilia) for the same film or across multiple properties. Though these actions may represent subtle differences in collecting practice, they all demonstrates a similar motivation leading to the same outcome of defining and reinforcing notions of identity. Memories can be linked to a single film or be more broadly associated with a connection to film itself. The concept of capital (cultural capital) association introduced here by Geraghty is instrumental in validating these items as important building blocks of the collector's character and, in the case of film ephemera, as a fan of the cinema. The opinions, insights and memories of the collector become bound to these objects, acting as a physical manifestation of their passions and their past.

A Nostalgic Audience

Where the relevance of the collector's age has been briefly discussed, noting a current increase in collectibles specifically for an adult marketplace, the notion of age is relevant to the association the collector has with popular culture ephemera. Cassidy comments that: ''the commercial repackaging of children's books for adult consumers and the ''manufacturing'' of those same images from those same children's books as tattoos, t-shirt decals, stickers, collectibles or tchotskies" (2008: 145), where the original meaning of the books (their association to the past and to childhood) is reappropriated to appease nostalgic tendencies and profit from the new 'popular culture' position these books now adopt. In more recent times, the concept of the adult collector reconnecting with their youth through collecting popular culture ephemera has seen a shift relative to notions of modern masculinity and adulthood (Cross 2008; Geraghty 2014). Conceptually this has been welcomed by producers of film and television collectibles, happy to cater for (and profit from) this motivated marketplace made up of individuals who have disposable income and a desire to reconnect. The growth in acceptance of this practice has reached a point where any element of devaluing the masculinity and/or maturity of these collectors is difficult as the phenomena grows to become relatively normative behaviour in contemporary society, beyond the traditional stereotypes conjured in the mind by the term 'fan' (Geraghty 2014; 2018). This is partly the result of there being more connections to popular culture to exploit, but also the rising accessibility to these products via the digital sphere connecting the general public, like-minded individuals and collectors, to popular culture and beyond.

This audience is prone to nostalgia (Davies 1979; Holbrook 1993) most prevalent within those post adolescence and into early adulthood, and based on their

interests founded in their formative (Bloom 2002). These individuals collect based on their inherent nostalgic proneness (Holbrook 1993) which allows producers of popular culture ephemera confidence when targeting their market. Whereas previous collectors of popular culture ephemera may have been seen to collect and gather modest, mass produced items (Fiske 1992), the contemporary adult popular culture collector is further incentivised to be more discerning, knowingly investing in specific and often more costly items of economic and cultural value (Dickens 2010). This shift in collecting coincides with the growing relevance of popular culture to an audience who have aged alongside its exponential growth, where collecting these items adds support to their desire to be considered legitimately engaged with the subject matter in an effort to further embed it within their identity.

While identity and its shared links to nostalgic gratification may underpin collecting activity, they are not necessarily the only driving force behind practice. As a final point of consideration, collecting film posters not only shares many of these characteristics but can further transcend any labels of commonality and juvenility through sharing some associations with the more culturally revered area of art collecting. With this in mind, the interplay between elitist and mass modes of consuming art, including art prints and street art, is structured in a similar vein as affordable yet parallel in regards to the motivations of the collector. This is ultimately emphasised in the AMP production process, where artistic values are celebrated while still retaining these aforementioned notions of nostalgia. Jack Durieux, co-owner of AMP production company comments to this:

> A big chunk of collectors are probably only interested in Blockbusters, the movies that they saw as a kid. It's the nostalgia. One of the most important

> points in this hobby is there is nostalgia […] when I see the poster it brings back memories
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

The Digital Age and the Virtual Turn

The insurgence of the internet has led to individuals demonstrating a 'digital self' which can represent them in ways previously unknown before the virtual turn (Thomas 2007; de Groot 2009). This change to identity generation has the potential to cause uncertainty, as more of what represents who we are has become fluid across digital and real worlds, resulting in elements which are more difficult for the individual to control, or are subject to flux as the dichotomy of identity is not bound to the psychical and psychological behavioural restraints of the offline world (Thomas 2007; Lapidot-Leffler and Barak 2011). Digital assimilation has also fundamentally affected our relationship with time and history, allowing for constant global access to news, entertainment, information, and commerce with few barriers to entry (Dwyer 2015). There is therefore a need to consider the role of the physical totems of identity that a collector can gather exert command over as identity in the digital era, and nostalgia embedded in identity generation, is bound to a less tangible world, where the physical object can demonstrate a 'stronger meaning' to the individual (Bolin 2017: 104), supported by Moist and Banesh:

> Collecting continues to grow in popularity even as contemporary society becomes increasingly virtual and fragmented. The status of objects may be changing, but people's meaningful attachments to them have only become stronger
>
> (2013: x)

This has further led to changes in how cultural capital is obtained and utilised, particularly in reference to the practices associated with collecting, where knowledge acquisition and dissemination has never been easier to participate in on both a local and global scale (Hills 2010). This has become integrated into modern collecting and shaping how collectors' practice, where economic capital can similarly be freely distributed through chains of commerce to obtain collectibles with an ease unlike any previous era.

eCommerce and the Online Marketplace

Whereas Information Technology has been key to the 'behind the scenes' practices of many businesses (Reynolds 2000; Lee 2001), its ability to allow companies and consumers to connect within a global marketplace has resulted in a significant shift in commercial activity. Initially this has lowered barriers of entry into the market as the necessity of brick and mortar store fronts is no longer paramount in reaching customers (Reynolds 2000). While these is often a need to operate within a physical space as well as the digital one, the opportunity for online businesses to appeal to consumers on various continents at any time has shifted traditional notions of what the 'marketplace' is (Molla and Licker 2003). This is relevant to the collector practice in regards to searching and finding objects of interest being no longer bound to the limitations of their own ability to physically access spaces of commerce.

Methods of communication between businesses and stakeholders have also drastically changed along with communication between individuals across society (Reynolds 2000: 421). For fans and collectors these changes have brought together those with shared interests to communicate and engage with one another across online spaces via social media, forums and even email (Reynolds 2000; Thomas 2006;

Bielby, Harrington and Bielby 2009; Dickens 2010; Bennett 2012; Vermaak 2019). This has fundamentally altered collector centric activities such as being able to demonstrate one's knowledge of a subject and even traditional economic activities as fans buy, sell and trade amongst themselves in ways previously impossible outside of specified physical spaces of activity (collectors conventions for instance). Where all of these activities are important to the AMP collector, the use of digital technology to facilitate collecting and capital exchange demonstrates a need to readdress practice against this contemporary marketplace.

A positive eCommerce experience of a frictionless transaction will build trust towards the vendor for the individual, whether this is a business or individual seller (Reynolds 2010). Though this is true of most markets, there is a suggestion that a perceived negative experience, e.g. not being able to efficiently purchase goods, could still lead to a positive relationship within the field of instant collectibles. As it is the nature of these items to be limited (making them scarce and 'in demand'), rarity of supply generates collector interest, leading to a positive perception of the seller as a supplier of highly desirable goods. This causes collectors to engage with purchasing activities as they seek to obtain an item for their collection which may be limited to perhaps 200, but the demand for it is in the 1000s. When this takes place online, strategies for purchase are needed to help benefit collecting practice, as this can inevitably come down to a 'fastest finger first', clicking the right purchase options before anyone else. If successful, securing an object as a collector not only fulfils the gratifications discussed in the previous chapter, but scarcity reinforces capital associations. Economic in the regard that the subsequent speculative value increases in relation to the aftermarket, and cultural in the knowledge that to own one of these rare items transfers exclusivity to the owner, meaning that owning a meaningful object

reaffirms the importance of whatever the object represents to the consumer. This is a complicated range of interconnectivity which will be explored in chapters 5 and 6.

These advancements have led to the collector to face near infinite access to potentially any item of ephemera that could find a home in their collection (Bjarkman 2004). This is problematic in the sense that those collectors can now actively search for desirable objects from their armchair and, in a short amount of time, amass a substantial collection at a potentially significant cost (Bjarkman 2004). For the majority of popular culture ephemera collectors, there is always something desirable to be found online in a marketplace that is oversaturated, with the exception being collectors interested in only the most niche and specific fields of interest (Jenkins 2017). If a vast collection is obtained, the various capital values associated with each item is brought into question, as the ease of obtaining items can place their speculative economic value and subsequent cultural value at a lower position in the field (Watkins and Belk 2016). As a result, there is a need to be a discernible collector in the digital age, a perspective gained through the acquisition of knowledge and an understanding of the market, community and objects of interest, what Bourdieu terms a 'feel for the game', an inherent knowledge of how to act within a particular field (McCormick 2006).

Availability of Knowledge and Online Community Interaction

How this knowledge is obtained has shifted for collectors, where knowledge retention and the need for significant intellectual investment in the individual's area of interest is potentially less important post internet (Reynolds 2010). Egan (2007) discusses collectors of specialist Horror films (VHS, DVD and even LaserDisc) communicating via the classified section of specialist publication *The Dark Side*. While this facilitated knowledge dissemination it is limited to the confines of the magazine

and its readership. The Virtual Turn has connected fans and collectors, and has allowed them to access and share knowledge, whilst simultaneously acting as a social platform for community-based activities. The internet affords the collector further mechanisms to engage with identity generation where:

> New digital spaces such as eBay, shop websites and fan-made pages offer the fan collector the potential for unlimited archives of images, knowledge and other digital ephemera that are important aspects of being a fan and displaying a sense of identity as a collector
>
> (Geraghty 2014: 161)

These archives of information are often reliant on cultural production from the fan/s themselves, becoming a significant aspect of developing their own cultural capital in contributing to and organising online libraries of information (Bjarkman 2004). Therefore, the digital space becomes an area to store, archive and ultimately reflect upon popular culture itself, including merchandise and collectibles related to film. However, Geraghty (2014) has also suggested that while those areas of the internet which store this kind of information have some potential for nostalgic reflection, they are unsentimentally constructed, revelling in providing an accurate and complete account, making them 'digital museums' of pop culture.

The content generated by fans and collectors exists in two broad brackets of rational and emotional content. The emotional can be linked to the social interaction between fans within online spaces, where the rational focuses on the archivist pursuits highlighted by Geraghty. It is in this regard that the nature of collecting itself becomes a much more transparent activity, particularly in regards to monetary value, as websites such as eBay become an accurate repository of historical purchase prices, pages like tv.cream.org have published books listing pop culture collectibles (Geraghty

2014)[9] and, in the case of AMPs, dedicated forum site expressobeans.com charts sales history alongside other rational information linked to the print[10]. This allows collectors to analyse a marketplace, directing them as to what new items to collect based on potential future demand and value (Belk 1995; Geraghty 2014). AMP collectors can compare the previous value of other prints representing a film, the value attributed to the artists previous work, any specialist methods of production involved, the company releasing the print and, perhaps most importantly, the community discussion surrounding the prints release which occurs online, to estimate the investment value of a new AMP before it is even sold.

Online community interaction feeds into notions of identity, where the collector can represent who they are via displaying, discussing and engaging with their interests with others on dedicated sites and forums (Bjarkman 2004; Thomas 2007; Dickens 2010). Geraghty supports this that: "the physical objects that make up a collection are semiotic signifiers of the self, and how fans use, display and exchange them is determined by the processes similar to those defined by sub-cultural distinction and the accumulation of fan culture capital" (2014: 33). In these spaces, "enthusiasts who never meet face to face regularly interface in internet forums" (Bjarkman 2004) to discuss a range of themes beyond the literal act of collecting, meaning the digital space has the potential to instigate deep personal relationships between collectors (Kim 2000). The 'value' of an individual's identity (as well as their economic, cultural and social capital), demonstrated through community interactions, may be all the more relevant, as peers can offer support or critique in favour of practice and strategy. Inevitably the depth of discussion of an individual, their knowledge, their collection and

[9] Geraghty also mentions that online store spaces for those businesses specialising in popular culture ephemera, such as Forbidden Planet, also act as archives of what is, and was, available to the collector/fan.
[10] Including size, artist, printer, print method, edition size, paper type, etc.

often their taste becomes paramount in regards to their respectability in the online community, and traditional notions of what defines a 'personality' are reduced to a secondary consideration. Sharing knowledge becomes an act of demonstrating understanding and experience, in turn providing the basis of a hierarchical system amongst collectors. That said Geraghty raises a further consideration in that: "the collecting community is built on hierarchies of taste defined by cultural capital, however, economic capital plays a much bigger part in the distinction between individuals as objects are bought and sold and rarity increases both financial value and esteem" (Geraghty 2014: 43). Bjarkman comments in reference to VHS collectors that "despite a communal sense of purpose amongst many fans and amateur archivists, much tape-collecting activity is fuelled by the spirit of competition, even among long-time friends" (2004: 228). For the AMP community, the popular forum thread entitled 'What Is Your Latest Proud Print Acquisition?' (expressobeans.com) is founded on this very principle, a mix of pride and the demonstrating of cultural capital through presenting financial and cultural superiority. Although knowledge is valuable within online collectors' communities, demonstrating significant financial investment is perhaps more so to securing hierarchy through one's collection. Any desire for cultural capital received through reverence of collectors leads many individuals to the online aftermarket[11] to find scarce and often costly items to further represent who they are as a collector, who they wish to be and to further define their place within their community.

[11] Facilitated in AMPs through Social Media groups (often on Facebook), the expresso beans site which integrates sales and trading, and auction sites, notably eBay.

Collecting Online

The advent of digital sites of transaction, in particular 'second-hand' markets such as eBay, have had a significant impact on the buying and selling of goods worldwide (Lee 2001), including collectibles which are more accessible now than pre-digital practices where popular culture collectors were often limited to a small specialist stores, collector's conventions, magazine classified ads, or the rare auction:

> The internet becomes the first port of call for fans who want an item to start or complete that all important collection. Sites such as eBay have revolutionised collecting and made the physical objects of popular media culture all the more available
>
> (Geraghty 2014: 2)

The ability to digitally search for items has become commonplace within collecting activities where quickly finding potential additions to one's collection nullifies the need to investigate and search for collectible items through traditional mechanisms (Lim et al 2002; Heljakka 2017; Jenkins 2017). What these processes neglect is the 'thrill of the chase' when hunting for a missing item within a collection, an element of the collectors practice noted previously as fundamental to their gratification (Shuker 2010, Geraghty 2014). That said, online browsing still facilitates this phenomenon to be met through scouring digital sites of commerce (Lim et al 2002; Dickens 2010; Heljakka 2017). Daily searches, initiating and reviewing automatic searches, and searching for mislabelled/misspelt items, all require significant engagement and dedication, representing a new age of 'rummaging' for collectibles (Reynolds 2000). Excitement can also be found within purchasing activity itself such as winning an online auction and even being able to buy an in-demand item at the original point of sale (Dickens 2010. The concept of 'F5-ing', rapidly pressing the keyboard shortcut to refresh a sales

page so that one is ready to purchase at the exact time a product becomes available, helps illustrate this shift. This practice is often utilised in AMP collecting and requires prior knowledge of the process which is often obtained through the sharing of 'tricks and tips' in areas where communities congregate online.

The shift towards digital technology has commonly assisted all collecting activities, allowing for the congregation of fan collectors online from all geographies to share and acquire knowledge as well as buy, sell and trade collectibles. The engaged fan can support their interests efficiently through the facilitated purchase of any and all ephemera of interest, allowing for objects to be amassed as an act of identity generation. This practice can be intrinsic to the habitus of the individual, their position and lifestyle dictating their interests, where identity is "centred on the concepts of *self-reflexivity* and *habitus*" (Adams 2006). While the digital environment may facilitate this development, it has also led to an embedded sense of flux within the individual (Baym 2015) driving the need to exert physical control over those elements which influence aspects of habitus and/or identity (Richardson 2015). Therefore, for the film fan an inherent need to possess physical objects intersecting cinema provides a motivation to collect said material culture.

In line with this thesis one area of historical persistence in regards to pop culture collecting is that of paper goods. Hughes states of the after effects of the Industrial Revolution that "paper goods especially had become inexpensive to produce, and anyone could afford to collect trade cards, cigarette cards and other paper advertising items" (1984: 3) which include, but are not limited to, movie posters. This has left a vast heritage of poster collecting as an area of potential academic interest and, as a practice, its acceptance further adds legitimacy to the pursuit of AMP collecting, particularly true when considered against the potential cultural value of posters now

acting as signifiers of historically significance events. The next chapter builds on this idea, representing the value of the poster and print medium as culturally valuable, where these artefacts have become all the more significant as their contemporary counterparts are becoming relegated to the digital space, increasing their cultural value and, by proxy, impacting all print which has become more sacred as a result.

Chapter 4 – Posters, Promotion, and Printing

Posters, Film Posters, Printing Posters and Generally Just More Posters

This chapter will briefly outline the history of posters and prints, with a further focus on film poster advertising, contextualising the varying positions of posters and the potential values that they adopt as collectible ephemera. The history of the poster itself, its origins and evolution, will be discussed, stressing the versatility of the poster as disposable publicity material through to artistic medium. Though the poster originated out of necessity and practicality as a tool of mass communication in a time where few, if any, alternatives existed outside of print, and mass literacy was still relatively low, the abundance of poster materials produced today evidences its continued significance as a communicative tool. This is due in part to their unique position within public space and consciousness (Guffey 2015). Posters are accessible to a myriad of audiences, with their imbued meaning, and the translatability of these messages, expressed via their graphic nature.

The consistent universality of the poster has bound it to a vast cultural history, enhancing their inherent social and political value as a marker when viewed outside of their initial context. Their placement in institutions of repute (museums and galleries) alongside private collections demonstrates this value, moving beyond cultural esteem and into examples commanding excessive economic prices[1]. When searching online for the 'most expensive posters', the majority of results returned refer to film posters. While this cannot be directly equivalent to cultural value, which is inherently subjective, and private sales outside of public record may contradict these values, this still

[1] The Guardian published a list of the top 10 movie posters sold at auction in 2012, with the lowest priced poster (*Frankenstein* dir. James Whale 1931) still amassing $198,000 in 1993. (Pulver, A. (2012) The 10 Most Expensive Film Posters. https://www.theguardian.com/film/gallery/2012/mar/14/10-most-expensive-film-posters-in-pictures) [accessed 10 June 2019]

demonstrates the importance of film posters and their connection to a mass audience. Here, the price is representative of the overall value we, as a culture, place on film posters and more broadly upon film itself. This cements the notion that posters (film posters specifically) are historically, culturally and sociologically important, yet this subject has received little academic focus, prompting the initial need to discuss this here. This also provides the foundation and context as to why AMP collectors can assign and attribute a number of values to the notion of the poster/print as a tangible example of ephemera in its own right. Furthermore, it provides AMP producers with a basis to construct and embed values within the prints they buy and sell.

To further understand the current role of film posters, and the contemporary position adopted by the AMP, this chapter draws upon personal interviews that have been conducted with those who work in film poster marketing and AMP production. While the nature of film marketing has changed considerably, the poster still represents a staple of the marketing process. As film posters have consistently appeared as an essential component of marketing practice, they have also attracted a vast audience of collectors with these artefacts acting as historical markers in their own right, often relative to personal histories the collector shares with the film. As such film poster collecting will be introduced in this chapter with the intention of this being an area of consistent address throughout the final chapters of the thesis.

The history of the poster has coincided with a number of important technological changes, both directly and indirectly relevant to poster production itself. These changes can be plotted against the interactions between posters and their audience and it is these same interactions which are instrumental in understanding the current dynamics and economics of poster collecting, particularly AMP collecting. Early advances in printing technology allowed posters to not only be mass produced but

also made in limited runs for a discerning group of early collectors (Parshall 1998). Alongside these changes, elements of design have also evolved in partnership with the poster that have further influenced the landscape of graphic design and the manner in which an audience will engage with the poster as a means of 'artistic' communication (Seidman 2007).

The poster as a medium has a strong inherent connection to artisan methods of production, as does art itself (Branaghan 2006; Dickens 2010), where the combination of these elements can be responsible for the posters allure to collectors. These values generate a hierarchy relative to the method of production being desirable, impacting collectors as they utilise these distinctions in their practice. Yet the relevance of the poster "ranges beyond the realms of art and design. Their time-specific, fugitive nature gives posters meaning and poignancy as historical documents" (Flood 2012: 2). They are temporal markers identifying shifts in culture, behaviour and beliefs, and this has resulted in their (albeit limited) recognition as important objects of academic inquiry (Timmers 1998). It is in these sentiments that a basis for the real value of posters to their audience can be addressed, outlining the posters resonance and justifying the widespread importance of the medium itself which becomes intrinsic in legitimising collecting activities.

This chapter will therefore define the cultural heritage of the poster thus implying the inherent value the medium, as an example of material culture, possesses. The film poster is bound to these same values and therefore collecting posters and film posters is a veritable practice linked to the connection an audience and collector feels with the subject matter and what it represents socially, politically, culturally and historically. As production practices are noted towards the end of the chapter, this provides a point to reintroduce the AMP, given that these same subjects are to be

addressed in the following chapter. In essence the history of the poster is responsible in understanding the values assigned during AMP production that collectors subsequently find appealing.

Posters: A Brief History

Askew and Hart cite the success of the V&A's *Power of the Poster* (1998) exhibition as evidence that interest in the poster is still pertinent across a varied audience[2]. The accompanying book, *The Power of the Poster* by Margaret Timmers (1998), acts not only as a visual guide to the curated posters but as a history of their cultural impact as a tool of mass communication. Although posters can be dated back much further[3], for the interests of this thesis contemporary poster production became distinctly commonplace in the mid to late 19th Century, due to adaptations in the printing process allowing for efficient mass production. Referred to as 'The Golden Age of Posters' (Moore 2010) this boom in poster production has shaped the life, look and usage of the poster in the years to follow.

The Origins of the 'Modern' Poster

Jules Chéret is synonymous with poster design and technological advancements relative to production, whose developments regarding lithographic printing in the 1870s led to a viable method of mass reproduction of artwork which, when coupled with the mechanical advancement of the industrial revolution, led to the

[2] While this comment is over 20 years old, more recent exhibitions in 2019 such as the Army Museum's *The Art of Persuasion: Wartime Posters by Abram Games*, and the Norton Museum's *Film Posters from the Dwight M. Cleveland Collection*, represent that their opinion is still relevant today.

[3] Caxton and his revolutionary printing press of 1477 being integral to the printing and distribution of flyers and subsequently poster advertising. Prior to this public notices existed by means of signs and inscriptions which can be dated back as far as the Roman Empire, and were relatable to the forms of communication still relevant to poster advertising and its motivations.

potential of “printing 10,000 sheets an hour” (Hutchinson 1969: 11). Lithography itself originated almost 100 years earlier between 1796-98 (Barnicoat 1972: 7) with its ability to replicate artistic imagery gathering momentum over the following century. Lithographic printing uses an image transferred to (traditionally) a flat side of limestone using an oil based medium. When treated the image becomes water retentive at which point an oil-based ink can then be applied to the stone and subsequently a piece of paper. As such the ink is held on the stone where the image is not present with the ink on the image transferred to the paper. Chéret’s breakthrough made the process cheaper and more efficient, increasing the ability to produce colour imagery using a minimal amount of transparent inks which when layered appear to be made up of many more colours than is actually the case (Moore 2010). Other methods, such as the much slower process of woodblock printing, were superseded regarding reproductive ability, these developments leading the way for future advancements in both chromolithography and photolithography.

Chéret’s significance shifts beyond his contribution to lithography and as an artist he worked with form and design relative to the images he produced, with Stainton (1977) arguing that Chéret is even responsible for the modem poster composition. Before posters had consisted of mainly type and some minimal, often unrelated, imagery, Chéret’s posters focused on impact, few words and bold images, often consisting of one central figure. These figures were frequently provocatively staged female forms (referred to as Chérettes) (Moore 2010). These posters, which can only be described as advertisements with artistic integrity, contained brand names and elements of copywriting alongside alluring illustrated images. The best examples of posters from this era are, according to Timmers: “exemplars of artistic originality, beauty, and excellence in technique” (1998: 16), resulting in these posters often being

revered by their intended audience to the point of being stolen from hoardings by admirers and early collectors. Focus upon artwork became commonplace in poster design, subsequently superseding other elements of content, from titles, to copy. The opportunity to consider the poster as a piece of art, particularly when reflected upon, initiates the potential value of the poster as ephemera.

Poster advertising became paramount across the 19th century where Guffey notes that these examples: “document the near-electric charge of consumers’ new buying power: the rapid profusion of mass-produced cigarettes, soaps and other consumer goods” (2015: 9), highlighting the results of the machine age for both businesses and consumers alike. In the UK specifically, the addition of foreign tariffs, coupled with more efficient production methods led to a need to create artistically stimulating posters to generate sales from native consumers (Flood in Bownes and Green 2008). The composition of these early designs is, in essence, the same as in the contemporary posters that a modern audience would be familiar with and Chéret had simultaneously begun to produce larger posters, as many previous examples had been no bigger than a book page (Barnicoat 1972: 8). His overall influence on process and style led to the medium of the poster being more closely associated with fine art than advertising, meshing visual interest with mass production and consumerism. The nature of artistic expression contained within the poster led to other names, such as Toulouse Lautrec and Alphonse Mucha, being able to make their mark within poster art whilst it was still in this transformational stage. Although they were based in Europe, British artists were also notably contributing to the medium:

> Certain British artists turned their attention to poster design, and an exhibition of posters in 1884 drew attention to the vigour and distinction of the new movement, whose most conspicuous exponents were Aubrey Beardsley, the Beggarstaff Brothers (James Pryde and William Nicholson) and Dudley Hardy[4]
>
> (Sheldon 1937: 72)

Posters in situ quickly became known as 'the art gallery of the street' (Barnicoat 1972: 12) with the culmination of the 19th Century witnessing posters being utilised for multiple purposes, amongst which was its use in advertising cultural events, e.g. Theatre and Musicals, paving the way for film posters to follow. This cemented elements of the design language of poster art, the heritage of which lingers within graphic design to this day. Examples include infamous posters advertising Le Chat Noir by *Théophile* Steinlen, Lord Kitchener's pointing finger in Alfred Leete's Your Country Needs you, and the numerous London Transport posters which will be discussed shortly. Even now, modern posters retain these compositional elements, with Shepard Fairey's 'Hope' poster for the Obama campaign demonstrating that contemporary posters parallel past images (as seen in the aformationed work by Leete).

One historic example of interest highlighted by Gallo is a poster from 1897 advertising an anti-anarchist play which "showed a capped anarchist about to smash the skull of a woman after having killed her husband" (1989: 54) and reads 'La Reforme Le 21 Novembre. Le Masque Anarchiste' (*Le Masque Anarchiste* being the title of the

[4] Poster artist Aubrey Beardsley was a prolific across the 1890s, known for his distinctive black and white drawings (Tate Modern exhibition 2020). The Beggarstaff Brothers graphic and colourful posters, designed to catch the eye of consumers towards the end of the 19th Century while ground-breaking proved too Avant Garde for producers of the time (Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge, 2020). Dudley Hardy produced similarly graphic, yet quirky poster imagery at the turn of the century, with *Yellow Girl* for *Today* magazine being particularly iconic of his style.

play itself).[5] This brutal graphic imagery, stylistically originating out of Art Nouveau, paved the way for a new form of propaganda poster, where art and message combined to communicate complicated, passionate beliefs. The style seeking to viscerally engage the viewer, a concept which would find its place across poster art during the first World War.

Posters in a New Century

The turn of the 20th century marked the beginning of forty years of design, artistic momentum and advancements in technology for the poster. The period represents rapid technological change and development, with transatlantic radio (1901), the Wright Brothers first attempt at flight (1903) and Henry Ford's efficient production line (1913), being just a few of the early innovations of the era. The remnants of Art Nouveau were replaced by the Futurist movement, Dadaism, Cubist art and the Bauhaus School, all of which emphasised the importance of order, line and structure within subsequent poster art (as well as within non-commercial art). In 1913 the London Underground commissioned a series of posters advertising their services and destinations. Sheldon concludes that their "motive was only partly commercial, being also one of social good sense – a desire to offer some beauty and pleasure to millions of daily travellers" (1937: 75). Then Managing Director of London Transport, Frank Pick is often cited as responsible for the commissioning these posters (Timmers 1998; Bownes and Green 2008), where he saw the unique possibilities of the drab walls of underground stations and a captive audience, and developed a substantial array of enticing posters. Unknowingly this created a legacy of poster designs still

[5] Gallo also discusses the introduction of Anarchy magazine in Paris in 1905 which influenced the anarchist movement at the time.

reproduced for sale in today's department stores and giftshops. Pick was a founding member of the Design and Industries Association, with the simple aim to produce "good design in British industry" (Rennie in Bownes and Green 2008: 86). The transport poster series was well received by the public drawing commercial and mass media attention to the potential of mutually combining advertising and art. This culminated in an exhibition in 1949 of these posters (alongside original paintings of the images used in the posters) at the V&A museum, opened by then Prime Minister Clement Atlee, emphasising the cultural and historic significance of the poster. This particularly series also sparked an interest at the time for collecting travel posters, one which persists today, where originals are highly sought and often difficult to obtain due to their inherent fragility and resulting scarcity.

During World War I and II, initiatives such as the Paper Restriction Order limited the use of paper for advertising purposes in the UK, meaning poster art during this period suffered. That said, the post-war International Advertising Exhibition of 1920 highlighted that posters were still produced and were still seemingly deemed societally important. Even with these restrictions and given the delicacy of the poster, many examples produced have still survived to the present day, a large number of which are housed in public institutions (such as museums), archives and private collections[6]. The importance of these images outside of their initial purpose of propaganda or public information was recognised as early as 1931 where Martin Hardie, a curator at the V&A, organised an *Exhibition of British and Foreign Posters* including war time examples. Hardie had served in the war and expressed concerns regarding the archiving and preservation of posters created in this period commenting: ''save for the

[6] It is likely due to the sheer volume of poster production as part of the war effort that a number of posters, particularly those considered propaganda images, have survived.

very limited number of copies that wise collectors[7] have preserved, the actual posters of the Great War will be lost and forgotten in fifty years'' (2016: 5)[8]. Prior to his exhibition he had documented a large number of posters in a book published in 1920 which he co-authored with A.K. Sabin titled *War Posters issued by Belligerent and Neutral Nations.* Although the V&A had begun collecting posters as early as 1910 (Timmers 1998) this further cemented the museums future interest in the conservation of posters.

This, combined with European influences most notably from the Swiss School of Design, De Stilj and Bauhaus, resulted in the poster becoming a visually honed clear and efficient tool to communicate a core message. By the outbreak of WWII in 1939, audiences had become more accustomed to the language of design. The posters produced as part of the war effort, many of which are now iconic visuals such as 'Dig on for Victory' and 'Careless Talk Costs Lives', further distilled the mediums purpose to a single simple idea. Naturally, this influenced posters to follow, particularly those advertising goods and services post war with the term 'propaganda' having less menacing undertones and instead used to describe persuasive content (Bird 1948)[9].

At this point the posters purpose veered away from illustrative prowess (although artistic integrity remained strong) and into succinct communication, focusing on 'concentrated design' elements exploiting shape, form and colour (Sheldon 1937: 84). Such elements that represented ideologies as well as schools of design became recognisable, for example, that of iconic Soviet propaganda images. Russian posters in particular had moved away from their initial influences found in the art nouveau stylings of Chéret and Mucha, and into a means of artistic expression representative

[7] Indirectly emphasising the potential role collectors can play in the rather noble note or preservation of ephemera which may inevitably be historically invaluable.
[8] Originally published in 1920.
[9] For further content regarding the development and meaning of propaganda see Hazan 1976 and Kenez 1985

of progressive ideals, manifesting in geometric shapes and lines. The typefaces were bold and minimal, as were the designs themselves along with the colours used. This reflected historical trends in Soviet art which also mimic elements of the ideals represented under this system, where Hazan notes of soviet propaganda that it "arises out of the same factors as the political, military and economic policies of a country, and pursues the same goals" (1976: ix). Similar themes can be found in other communist countries and their respective posters. Guffey (2015), highlights Poland and Czechoslovakia in particular, countries which were effectively under Soviet rule during this period. Here posters dismissed previous styles and instead embodied political messages in the form of surreal and striking conceptual designs which avoided the tight censorship protocols in place.

Following this, poster production became less about fine art and more about impact and communication, supported by Barnicoat who combines this idea with another as he goes on to establish one of the motivations which saw the public's perception of poster art begin to change into the 1950s:

> The idea that the poster should be the 'art gallery of the street' suggested that artwork should come from eminent painters as well as 'commercial' artists. Unfortunately this resulted all too often in a respectable, tasteful series of harmless views of jolly travel posters that may be characteristic of the period but which hardly added to the power of poster design
>
> (1972: 102)

Although not exclusive across all poster art, many posters and their respective artists became self-referential in regards to the medium in the late 1950s and into the 1960s, looking to the history of poster art for inspiration thus leading to the content being deemed 'uninspired' (Barnicoat 1972, Sheldon 1937). Posters became designed by

committee and the need for images resembling ‘fine art’ became replaced by the notion of conveying the ‘spirit of the product’ (Barnicoat 1972:118). The economic boom in Western Europe after WWII encouraged consumerism to varying degrees across all classes and socio-economic groups. Brands became more targeted and each poster representing consumables now had to compete against an abundance of advertising materials. This is not to say that the poster was not a valid nor creative medium, but it was becoming commonplace and artistically confirmative.

The counter culture movement of the 1960s was encapsulated in, what Barnicoat refers to as, ‘The Hippy Poster’, psychedelic images positioned as an offshoot of mainstream poster art and a design language which remains iconic of the era. The art nouveau origins of the art poster and the work of artists like Chéret and Mucha were redeployed as a parallel statement to the stale commercial and political advertising that had become ubiquitous. Examples were influenced by the aforementioned communist posters of the previous decades which had subsequently made their way into the west becoming a foundation for fashionable self-expression. The content and design of the ‘hippy poster’ focused on artistic communication with a like-minded audience, and not on corporate communication. Many examples can be found advertising the affiliations of music i.e. events, artists and albums, generating further design interest in the concept of album art where one field of design influenced the other.

This return to artistic integrity resulted in many of these posters becoming staples within domestic spaces at the time and in the years to follow. Posters were bought and sold as a fashion statement, in a similar vein to clothing of the era which was seen as consistently changeable and easily disposable (Flood 2012). As posters could be used as temporary decoration, they became further linked to the conceptual

projection of identity, where “the posters on your walls were a way of sampling cultural reference points, pulling them into your own orbit and displaying your savoir faire to others” (Flood 2012: 58). The integration of the poster into the home across the 60s reflected more than just fashion, highlighting a time of changing ideologies between generations (Guffey 2015) where the posters displayed demarcated one’s political affiliations. The influence of these posters in terms of design within both art and culture was, and is, influential within the field of music and beyond, with film posters also taking inspiration from reflecting personal ideals and beliefs as opposed to simply the films narrative and stars. The importance and impact of the 60s into the 70s has led to a number of collections being published consisting of images (Hayes 2009; Loren and Evans 2012; Evans 2013) emphasising the continued relevance of poster design[10]:

> This bombardment of the senses has had the effect of producing a conditioned public whose tastes in visual experience are sophisticated. The effect of this poster craze on poster advertising generally has been to turn commercial advertisement, and even the political poster, into a decorative mural and to link posters of the 1970s with the designs of the 1880s and 1890s almost a hundred years ago
>
> (Barnicoat 1972: 67)

This return to form and design is by no means an isolated instance. Other examples of design, such as the minimal German style of Plakatstil (meaning poster style) made popular by Lucian Bernard in the 1920s, were being renewed and repurposed, such

[10] The interest in Gig Poster art was arguably revitalised in the 1990s with key artists such as Bob Masse, Emek, Jay Ryan, and Malleus, and led to the creation of limited-edition screen-printed posters and events such as Flatstock. This area is also in parallel with the boom in Street Art and similar prints from artists such as Banksy and Shepard Fairey being made available as limited prints. Both of these areas have been instrumental in the Alternative Movie Poster trend which grew in the late 2010sand beyond, and these origins will be referred to again later in this thesis.

as in Milton Glazer's iconic Bob Dylan poster from 1967 which shares the same minimalist qualities. What this provided was an overriding opposition to commercial information posters, reinvigorating the value of artistic merit bound to the poster, generating a cultural distinction between posters which encourage artistic integrity and those which do not. More often it is the former that are housed within collections, moving beyond their informative value and into visual interest as material culture.

Posters and New Technology

However, this era was short lived and few existing texts have taken the history of the poster beyond this period outside of collected works consisting purely of images. The supposition as to why this is the case falls on the lack of innovation in design as new computer-based technology infiltrated the world of poster making (Timmers 1998; Vrijthoff in De Jong, Burger and Both 2008; Branaghan 2012; Guffey 2015). Lithography shifted from being a skilled exercise in printing separate colours to the 'four-colour process', printing images using dots and halftones, losing the vitality and impact of previous posters. Photography became more common across commercial advertising, partly due to research from the 1960s initiated by David Ogilvy, CEO of advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather, concluding that photographic posters were more effective in communicating to consumers (Timmers 1998). The advent of computer aided design (CAD) and Macintosh computers in the mid-1980s, led to a more mechanised method of producing art, type and composition for commercial poster advertising. This resulted in a large amount of posters being similar in their construction and appearance, forming a vicious cycle where less 'daring' artwork and design is now being utilised for a fear of not meeting an anticipatable profitable return from the audience. As CAD became more accessible the credibility of the artwork

declined, a theme which has continued to the present where skills honed by previous poster makers were, and have been, ‘tossed aside’ (Guffey 2015). Ultimately this has led to a stabilisation of the art and design process where the medium plays a secondary role to screen-based media (Guffey 2015).

Commercial poster art is now influenced by the posters design history and the limitations of CAD leading a series of repetitive, lacklustre posters reliant on safe, tried and tested advertising. Any examples of innovation stand out, but often derive their content from pre-existing eras of design or from the inclusion of a pertinent statement of the political/cultural landscape, similar to the aforementioned ‘Hippy Posters’ of the 1960s. Some originality exists within the arts, such as the use of the medium by the *Guerrilla Girls* in their protest posters of the late 1980s targeting sexism in art; in the public service arena, where the poster was integral in raising awareness of the AIDS risk in the 80s and 90s; in the world of music and fashion, with the minimalist style of Patrick Nagel being a key era defining example; and also in the commercial landscape such as the controversial posters from the *United Colors of Benetton* across the 1990s.

A more recent return to the motivations of Frank Pick, *Art on the Underground* started in 2000, where platforms, maps and poster sites on the London Underground were utilised as temporary art installations. Graphic artists are also becoming more accustomed to the potential of CAD, advancing to a point where it can be utilised by artists and designers as part of their artistic ‘tool kit’ (Flood 2012). Digital art can be created, printed and distributed with a greater diligence than in previous decades, as the process becomes less about it simply being efficient and more about producing quality images through a new artistic medium. Poster advertising in the 21st Century has shifted but is lacking in age to offer any worthwhile respective review at this time.

Poster Collecting

From individuals to national museums and across exhibitions, posters have generally been recognised for their collectability and cultural value. Considering this it is interesting that Harris comments: "posters as the focus of collecting have attracted the attention of few historians" (1998: 11), emphasising a need for further review. Posters can act as signifiers of previous political and cultural exchanges, and as objects of academic value when contextualised against their history (Gallo 1989; Wonfor 2015). This is reinforced in the notion that "posters endure as one of the most permanent and solid forms of visual communication" (Guffey 2015: 7). The temporal utility of posters destines them to have a short lifespan with their usefulness limited by the continual replacement of the events, goods and services they promote. If not for poster collecting an opportunity to revaluate them as academically valuable cultural markers would be lost. The poster is therefore a serious, authentic, collectible item in its own right based on these associable values, particularly when paralleled with rarity and scarcity as a result of their inherent fragility (Nourmand and Marsh 2004).

The Origins of Poster Collecting

The origins of collecting posters can be tentatively linked to the 1880s – 90s[11] which, according to Harris (1998), mirrors the exponential increase in art posters being created and made available at this time. Posters by the likes of Chéret and his contemporaries became highly sought after by early collectors, with a number being stolen directly from walls as soon as they were posted[12]. Because of this 'special

[11] Harris identifies that in the 1980s in Paris, many early collectors would seize 'copies of favourite posters almost as soon as bill posters had put them up' (1998: 12) leading to further legislation to protect these posters, but making these actions

[12] That said, due to their disposable nature it is difficult to determine how many posters have survived and how many were simply lost, or thrown away. It may be assumed that the most aesthetic will have been

editions' of posters were soon printed and sold to a burgeoning collector's market, leading to an exhibition of posters in Paris followed by a show in the Grolier Club, New York in 1890 (Barnicoat 1972). This highlighted their broad public appeal and burgeoning notions of cultural value which further encouraged collectors to collect. Sheldon (1937: 75) discusses Edmond Sagat, a print dealer who listed over two thousand posters with prices within a catalogue which could be bought directly by early collectors. This catalogue featured examples ranging from the arts, exhibition posters and product advertisements. Iskin refers to Sagot as "the first and most knowledgeable dealer of posters" (2014: 95), noting his passion and enthusiasm for the subject. His dealership featured work from the most significant poster artists of the era, with one anecdote telling of a judge declaring that a particularly provocative poster by Lautrec was not fit for public viewing, resulting in Sagot buying the entire run to later sell in his store, their 'offensiveness' and rarity being a lucrative selling point. At the same time collectors also began locating their favourite artists to directly obtain posters prior to distribution (Harris 1998). Not only can this be linked to previously discussed motivations for completing a collection (see Chapter 2) but this also allowed for the posters themselves to be collected in near mint condition, a factor imperative to the value of the poster.

Wonfor's article, ''How to Weigh a Poster: The restitution of the Hans Sachs Poster Collection' (2015), focuses on the eponymous collector, who began gathering posters in 1896 and subsequently became an avid acquirer of a broad range of examples varying in style and subject. This included propaganda and political posters, alongside those advertising entertainment, notably early film posters. However, with a

gathered/collected and archived, but the countless posters which constitute a more commercial and less artistic form may have no remaining examples.

collection of around 12,500 examples, it is likely that this large a body would include posters which represent all aspects of poster usage. He is responsible for co-founding the ‘’Verin der Plakat Freunde – The Society for the Friends of the Poster’’ (Wonfor 2015: 58), an organisation that, from its introduction in 1905, paved the way for Sachs to release the *Das Plakat* journal in 1910 which at its peak, ‘’was circulating over 11000 copies internationally per month’’ (Wonfor 2015: 59). This demonstrates that Sachs was by no means alone in his interests during this boom in poster collecting. In this period posters were modern, artistically appealing, and accessible, hence the desire to obtain them. Collectors began focusing on condition and preservation, with rare examples being sold for exponentially increasing sums (Guffey 2015). As previously mentioned, the V&A dates their initial interest in poster collecting as far back as 1910, yet Timmers (1988) notes that museums began archiving posters as valuable historical markers in 1899, when Roger Marx proposed the idea in *Les Maitres de L’Affiche,* a periodical of the day. On this note, such was the historical significance of Sachs’ collection that it went on to be celebrated in an exhibition at The German History Museum in 1992. Inclusion within such a prominent institution further emphasises the cultural integrity and iconicity of poster art, as well as the importance assigned to collecting and archival.

It is around the time *Das Plakat* was being distributed (1910-21) that Harris identifies that ‘the old passion for poster collecting appears ‘exhausted’ (1998: 18). Poster art had become abundant and the collecting marketplace had become saturated, with pioneers such as Sagot mimicked across Europe, meaning early poster collecting all but came to an end by the time of the breakout of World War I (Sullivan 2005). In France, the illustrated posters which once covered the hoardings and walls “were little more than decomposing rubbish” (2014: 24) and an overall decline in

interest left only the semblance of poster collecting across the first half of the 20th Century[13], rising in popularity again when a small number of individual began gathering war time propaganda imagery. This was a potentially difficult undertaking given the posters fragility and the destructive events of this time, yet not a lost endeavour given the sheer number of posters created during this period.

Mid-Century Collecting

The late 1950s and 1960s saw a renewed interest arise in collecting, linked to the post-war stability experienced in many developed countries, along with an increase in disposable income. Initially, collectors gathered historical examples but as posters of the 60s became the embodiment of the art and politics of the era, and in parallel with the rise of counter culture activism, the popularity of these images to collectors evidenced a resurgence in posters (Harris 1998). The opportunity to display these images in the home meant collectors could demonstrate their political and personal affiliations through posters, making them desirable objects to collect.[14]

Posters allowed individuals, but in particular a younger audience, to decorate their houses, flats and bedrooms easily, cheaply, and with a conviction that they were able to represent their personalities (Flood 2012)[15]. It is these motivations, amongst others such as financial gain (Harris 1988), that have supported the constancy in poster collecting to the present day. Progressing from the 1970s and the growing

[13] Again, likely symptomatic of the War period as other, more pressing issues faced would be collectors.
[14] While movie posters will be further introduced shortly, examples which might fit into this category include Arnaldo Putzo's 60s poster for *Get Carter* (dir. Mike Hodges 1971), Saul Bass's minimal yet impactful poster for *Vertigo* (dir. Alfred Hitchcock 1958) and Robert McCalls evocative poster for *2001: A Space Odyssey* (dir. Stanley Kubrick 1969) playing on the popular interest in space travel at the time.
[15] The nature of what constitutes a collection is covered in more detail in the Literature Review. In simple terms a collection is often defined by the individual and often constitutes of a number of similar objects or ephemera related to a common theme being gathered together. In this regard not all posters displayed in this manner may be part of a collection as this would be determined by the individual themselves.

accessibility to a whole host of media outlets, Gallo notes that “in the western world posters are no longer as relevant as they used to be because they have become desirable collectors items” (1989: 254) and this in turn has readdressed the cultural and political meaning of the poster itself shifting from communication tool to collectible.

While general collecting motivations have been acknowledged, there are a number of poster specific elements to consider. The inherent fragility presents the opportunity to care for something which can be considered of cultural value. The artistic merit of the poster is also often cited as desirable to the collector (Harris 1998; Parshall 1998; Iskin 2014; Wonfor 2015), with Hutchinson commenting that “the really effective poster does more than this – it remains a work of art long after its original purpose has become part of the past” (1969: 10), where the original intent of the poster as an advertisement, is compounded in its aesthetic quality, subsequently making it more appealing to collectors. Collecting posters as artworks, can be linked to elements of self-ascertainment and fulfilment, selecting posters based on artistic reverence is relative to reinforcing the collector’s identity (or the identity they wish to possess). In her essay, Wonfor (2015) cites this reason as a justification for Sachs’ practice, where he himself states that his desires were driven by his ‘personal taste’ in artwork. Harris concludes their account with statements regarding modern poster collectors:

> Posters permit their possessors the luxury of simultaneously exploiting and criticizing the merchandising rituals of modern society. While many poster collectors prize rarity, artist signatures and aesthetic quality above all, consumer pleasures so dominate poster subjects that owners are inevitably linked to popular culture
>
> (1998: 35)

The notions of collecting posters as both a by-product and as a statement of popular culture are not only relatable to consumer motivations in modern society, but are also particularly of interest when considered alongside film posters specifically, with the product of film immune to standardised notions of consumption via its potential to represent a deep-seeded emotional connection to an audience. Where posters may be collected as cultural markers, and as artwork, film posters provide a connection between the collector and their interest in cinema which is likely to be integrated into their identity.

Film Posters

With so little currently written regarding posters and poster collecting, content related to the cultural position of film posters, plus any notion of collecting them, is vastly underrepresented. Outside of celluloid (some examples of which have long been misplaced, lost or destroyed) film posters are one of the only consistent physical artefacts which represent distribution history (and film history itself), giving them an undeniable cultural, social and economic value. Posters are responsible for the first instances of film marketing due to their practicality and the unavailability of alternative methods, and even as cinema advertising broadened its marketing methods, it still remained the crux of the campaign. For example, though *Jaws* (dir Steven Spielberg 1975) is noted for its saturated television campaign (and immense marketing campaign in general), it is Roger Kastel's iconic poster that remains memorable (Wyatt 1994), as outlined in the earlier case study.

The history of posters previously discussed contextualises the broad cultural value of these artefacts, and at the start of cinema marketing advertisers ''borrowed other business practices from adjacent industries such as theatre and vaudeville''

(Staiger 1990: 3). In the late 19th Century, the likes of P.T. Barnum had identified the potential of advertising 'entertainment', where posters became common place in promoting circus and variety-shows. These methods allowed film advertisers to communicate using design language that had already proven effective and one which audiences already understood. This is all the more relevant when considering that early cinema in the United States and the United Kingdom was first made available en masse alongside other fairground attractions. In the UK 'Moving Pictures first appeared on the fairground at the King's Lynn Mart on 15th February 1897' (National Fairground and Circus Archive 2017) with travelling cinema being the normal practice until dedicated sites became viable around 1914-1915.

Film Posters in Brief: History, Elements, Usage and Production

Early examples of posters being regularly utilised to advertise entertainment date to the 1850s (Gallo 1989) but were often simple, type-centric flyers and handbills (Branaghan 2006: 12). Where the poster usage and printing technology developed, so did the staples of layout and design, soon adopted by film posters with brands and product names replaced by directors, actors and titles. During the late 1890s and into the early 20th Century, out of the field of entertainment, the notion of promoting 'celebrities' gained traction, resulting in these figureheads becoming the central focus of a number of publicity posters. Chéret's 1893 poster for the Folies Bergére, advertising the first performance of their new American star dancer Loïe Fuller[16]. The growth in 'star power' as a sales pitch shifted from the stars of the performance halls and into early cinema at the turn of the 20th Century, which saw the introduction and

[16] Such is the attraction of this 'star dancer' that the hierarchy of type deployed sees Fuller's name take distinct precedence on the poster. Also of note is that this same year, Toulouse Lautrec's poster focusing on Jane Avril, publicising her cabaret show at the Jardin De Paris was distributed.

rise of modern cinema as we understand it today.[17] Highly illustrated posters for films soon followed, many featuring lavish locations which appealed to the audiences interest in travel and the excitement of the exotic, though these locations rarely featured in the films themselves. Graphic representations of the star players began accompanying these landscapes, with the origins of the marketable 'face' of a movie often linked back to silent film actress, Florence Lawrence. Lawrence, who subsequently became labelled as 'The First Movie Star' (Brown 1999), became the first actor to be credited in writing for her starring role in a motion picture[18].

This led to audiences purchasing tickets under the pretence that: "the star's presence in a film is a promise of a certain kind of thing you would see if you went to see the film" (Dyer 1987: 5). Dyer notes that this appeal is further relative to the audience's motivations to see the film, from feeling a loose emotional connection (i.e. they enjoyed the previous films featuring that individual) through to imitation and

[17] The birth of cinema itself accredited to the Lumiere Brothers and their 1895 film *La Sortie des ouvriers de l'usine Lumière* (Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory). Posters advertising the 'Cinématographe Lumière' accompanied early showings of the brothers' work.

[18] This is the result of an early publicity stunt where Carl Laemmle, founder of Independent Moving Pictures (IMP) a production and distribution company who signed Lawrence to their books, initiated rumours that the actress had been killed in a car (streetcar) accident. Although the concept of star power barely existed, the novelty of the rumour caused intrigue and commotion, which was settled a few months later in 1910 when Laemmle published a short statement in *The Moving Picture World,* a trade journal in the early days of commercial cinema. The article, under the heading 'We Nail a Lie', not only confirmed that Lawrence was alive and well, but also about to appear in IMP's latest picture, alongside a photograph of the actress herself. Although not a poster advertisement, this combination of publicity, picture, photograph and name, arguably acts as the precursor to the design content of the modern film poster. Concurrently to the article, Lawrence was requested by Laemmle to make a public appearance in St Louis to solidify that she was alive and well, while simultaneously publicising her new film. Klien (2015) cites the *St Louis Times* which reported that the number of attendees to meet Lawrence at the train platform, rivalled the crowd which had come to see President William Taft's previous visit, thus cementing the burgeoning star status of Lawrence given her potential to draw in a large audience.
Lawrence was featured in *The Moving Picture World* a number of times, with one particularly interesting instance of her featuring twice in successive weekly magazines January 1st 1916 and January 8th 1916. On page six of the first publication we see the back of a woman with a large question mark underneath and the text 'Who's Back'. The following issue revealed the woman to be Lawrence, with the caption reading 'Back Again, Who's Back? Florence Lawrence's Back', with both advertisements featuring Laemmle's name below, presumably crediting him with the conceptual nature of this short, but innovative campaign. The nature of this campaign can only be considered to have impact if the reveal of Lawrence is realised by the reader to be of cultural value, by directly or indirectly recognizing the notion of star power. The wordplay featured here, alongside the staggered reveal of the two images, has the aesthetic of modern teaser campaigns a staple of contemporary film marketing.

projection, where an audience is enamoured to the point of mimicry (Dyer 1998). The apparent power of celebrity appeal meant that “posters were created solely to lure the public into paying to see films that usually had little or no chance of matching the excitements promised by their frequently unrestrained advertising” (Branaghan 2006: 12).

However, as audiences became increasingly acclimated to the conventions of film, they also became more selective. A star presence was still alluring but so too was narrative, which began being addressed within film poster art in the early 1910s. Staiger proposes that ‘’pre 1915 ads and posters indicate a tendency for illustrations to highlight one major scene from the film’’ (1990: 12), though admits that more extensive review of this is required. She goes on: ‘’from the first years, some individuals were offended by ‘’lurid’’ posters sensationalising narrative events or providing false representations of a film’s plot’’ (Staiger 1990: 14), similarly seen in later years in posters advertising exploitation and small budget cinema (). It is not without a sense of irony that it is perhaps these sensationalist illustrations that make these posters so desirable to collectors today (Nowell 2011). Stubblefield (2007) notes that these posters, use imagery which encourages audiences to further interact with the poster, to immerse themselves in a single static image. This is related to Barthes’s (2006 originally published 1970) analysis of film stills, which represent narrative beyond their isolated frame. Stubblefield addresses that an audiences’ reading of the poster can potentially give way to seeing the film where if the film one ‘sees’ through the poster is considered inferior it may dissuade viewing the film itself. This power of the poster is perhaps overexaggerated but the notion of audiences being ‘misled’ by the poster is a phenomenon that still exists today (Branaghan 2007, 2012; Stubblefield 2007). Exploitation cinema is reliant on publicity materials going “over and above

typical posters, trailers and newspaper ads. Exploitation producers conceded that because their films lacked identifiable stars or the recognition provided by conventional genres, they needed an extra edge to be "put over" with audiences" (Schaefer 1999:4).

Many film posters today still revolve around 'star power' and it is these names and faces alone which are enough for an audience to base their consumption decisions. The general accessibility to celebrity culture and the common roles played by certain actors across genres, allows a time short audience to make choices at a glance. Not only do these posters test well with focus groups due to familiarity, benefiting studios who use these also costly assets primarily to lure in an audience and, by default, a profit (Burke 2016; Segran 2016). Though the inclusion of star imagery is not a recent addition to the film poster, it has become a singular focus of contemporary design, with celebrity 'floating heads' dominating the modern poster. While this may resonate with a wider audience due to their recognisability, poster designs dominant in these images are often met with an apathetic response from collectors, particularly within the AMP community. This is not to say that celebrity fandom and imagery is not motivational to collectors, but the desire for actors to be further integrated into a composition is seemingly lacking in current design.

When discussing the 'standardised' movie poster composition, early examples often include a number of similar elements to commercial and political posters, while being influenced in tone by the surrounding art movements of the era. This is notable in examples such as the poster art for *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (dir. Fritz Lang 1920) and *Metropolis* (Dir. Fritz Lang 1927), embodying characteristics of expressionism, art deco, and futurism respectively. As *Metropolis* stands firmly in the Science Fiction genre, the parallel to futurism is particularly relevant, the poster for the film representing the style, narrative and content of the film itself through the design. Fine

art continued to influence poster design to further represent the content of the film, seen in many later examples. The art for *Sunset Boulevard* (Dir. Billy Wilder 1950) has a tone of expressionism, the art movement often associated with early noir and the aforementioned *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, and the posters produced more recently for Baz Lehrman's revival of *The Great Gatsby* (2013) utilised design language which again parallels the Art Deco movement of the 1920-30s alongside the films period setting. More recently, the key art for *Once Upon A Time in Hollywood* (dir. Quentin Tarrentino 2019) purposefully references film poster art's own history, distributing a fully illustrated poster more likely seen in between 1940s-1970s. The use of artistic practices embedded in film poster design becomes a staple of interest for collectors across subsequent years generating a parallel cultural esteem relative to artistic integrity.

As Staiger (1990) discusses the regularisation of film distribution from 1909 to 1915, she notes that the growing predictability of this process allowed promoters to have an awareness of key details regarding narrative and leading actors well before the film was to be shown which ''made it possible to alert consumers as to when, where, and why they ought to go to the movies'' (Staiger 1990: 6). Simultaneously posters adopted on a bigger role in film marketing, particularly when contextualised against the introduction of photomontage[19] techniques being incorporated alongside lithographic mass printing. Posters became bigger and more lavish in their designs, but also more readily available to film distributors leading to greater levels of marketing competition. It was only by employing the talents of skilled artists that films further differentiated themselves from one another, with the roster including such names as C.B. Falls, remembered today for his 1923 illustrated ABC Book; and Ernest Haskell,

[19] A process of pasting photographic images together for mass reproduction dated back to 1916

an ‘etcher’ revered in his own lifetime being employed by Metro Pictures in 1915. The marketing package as a whole attempted to stress the quality of the product, with the calibre of artwork representing the superiority of the film.

During the first half of the 20th Century, advancements in the mass reproduction of photographic imagery led to ‘real’ images within the film poster, though illustration and portraiture was still commonplace within film advertising. These methods highlighted the main ‘stars’ in a way that, for example, Cubist design could not. As discussed previously, the ‘Star System’ was readily seen in early film poster advertising, but became even more notable during World War I (Branaghan 2006: 12), with certain celebrities attracting and guaranteeing an audience (Elberse 2007). During the next decades and across WWII, the composition of the film poster became further standardised, conventionally similar to modern movie posters. The British ‘Quad’[20] was adopted as the standard size in the UK, in parallel to the American ‘One Sheet’ in the USA[21].

By the 1950s the abundance of film marketing, and film itself, allowed an audience, based on past experiences with film advertising materials, to discerningly

[20] The British Quad is often found in landscape composition and measures 40’’ x30’’. The US One Sheet is typically closer to 36’’ x 24’’ and often in portrait.

[21] After the poster, the next notable innovation in cinema marketing practice was the incorporation of the film trailer, which Staiger dates to being routinely utilised in the late teens of the 20th Century. These ‘short films’ took on several styles, but for the main part they introduced the narrative and the film’s stars in the same way a poster campaign would, only in this instance the trailer would exploit the visual mediums capacity for moving image, and later the audio capabilities that were introduced to cinema in 1927. Other gimmicks to market films were also employed during this period, such as Universal’s beauty contest where the winner would star in the studios next film (Staiger 1990: 10). Exhibitors themselves would instigate word of mouth advertising, and cinema lobbies housed lobby cards alongside posters for upcoming features. Soon product endorsement and star publicity were regular extended features of film marketing, further aiding the sphere of influence of marketing and publicity strategies. These growing efforts, alongside the exponential growth in film and cinemas themselves, naturally led to the concept of widespread, nationwide campaigns being crafted. This was also relative to cost effectiveness as studios promised better publicity materials in return for higher rental returns from local distributors for their films. However, Staiger points out that the process of national advertising only becomes standardised practice in the 1930s and beyond (1990: 14). It is at this point that the poster truly becomes simultaneously integral to, but only one part of, a much larger visual marketing campaign.

select films based on a developed personal taste. Film advertising moved ‘from campaigns of mass appeal to campaigns aimed at specific target audiences’ (Staiger 1990: 4). More disruptive design began to infiltrate some film marketing campaigns into the 1960s to further differentiate movies from one another. The work of Saul Bass being particularly relevant as Hutchinson notes that ‘his work for the film world is especially interesting’ in that he ‘reduced the normally all intrusive credits to an insignificant part of the design, as in his famous poster for *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1958)’ (1969: 145). Although Saul Bass was the exception and not the rule when it came to film poster art, his contribution demonstrated the potential of the medium to be both commercial and artistically rich, leading to Bass’s work being highly revered amongst designers, collectors and academics alike.

This enforces a need to view the cultural value of some film posters as artworks in their own right, beyond the current limited acknowledgement to date. On this note, film poster art received a cultural milestone in 1977 when a travelling exhibition from the Welsh Arts Council entitled ‘’Selling Dreams – British and American Film Posters 1890 – 1976’’ became the first of its kind within the United Kingdom (Knight 1977). The exhibition acted as a “reflection of the variety and quality of British and American film posters produced over the last eighty years” (Knight 1977: i), a difficult endeavour as the number of posters considered, according to the curators, was in the thousands (Stevens in Knight 1977). During this decade (and into the 1980s), many of the original film poster artists reached retirement age. With few illustrators accustomed in this style to take their place, and a decreasing market for film poster illustrators the art of the movie poster began to suffer. This was reinforced by falling marketing budgets in the 1980s combined with the relative high cost of producing an illustrated poster.

Brian Bysouth's illustration for the 1987 Bond film *The Living Daylights* (dir. John Glen) is considered the last large-scale use of a British illustrative poster being used internationally during this period[22]. Branaghan cites the 1986 removal of the Quota Act for British film being instrumental in the downfall of British film poster illustration, where less British films meant less work for British artists. As a result, many UK based artists including the likes of Tom Chantrell (who illustrated many of the 'Carry On' images, as well as providing the quad for the 1977 release of *Star Wars*), Vic Flair (*The Man Who Fell To Earth*) and Tom Beauvais (*Fantastic Voyage*) found less mainstream work available to them.

The arrival of accessible home video meant led to less exploitation/budget cinema being shown in theatres, instead coining the term 'straight to video'. As these films had previously relied on illustrators to craft alluring posters to encourage attendance, their skills were no longer needed nor employed in this manner. Some artists still found work designing video box art but this was figuratively, economically and quite literally smaller in scale[23]. Even this illustrative advertising faced a public backlash as the imagery again misrepresented the quality of the films (Branaghan in Shannon 2012). These factors, alongside the advent of computer aided design (CAD), led to film posters becoming a series of celebrity headshots placed alongside standard typefaces in pedestrian compositions. Branaghan attests to this: ''posters today don't have a personality because they're not the product of a human being, but that of a human mediated through a computer'' (Branaghan in Shannon 2012). Furthermore, any risk in commercial film poster art that was previously present, usually in an attempt

[22] Bysouth was paid £3000 for the original commission, a price which may well have been the highest for this variety of work (Branaghan 2012).

[23] It is worth noting artists such as Graham Humphreys whose successful artwork on the UK video release for *The Evil Dead* (dir. Sam Raimi 1983) led to numerous commissions demarcating him as a recognisable genre artist working in the field (see grahamhumphreys.com).

to excite and entice an audience, is now rarely seen for fear of losing a guaranteed audience (Branaghan in Shannon 2012).

Although this trend has become commonplace in contemporary film posters, the production of the poster itself is still relevant in an increasingly digitised world, a point noted by those currently working in film marketing. Danny James, Senior Marketing Manager at distributor Curzon Artificial Eye has recently been responsible for publicising such films as Park Chan-Wook's 2016 film *The Handmaiden* and Charlie Kaufman and Duke Johnson's 2015 Animation *Anomalisa*. Dorottya Székely, Marketing Manager at distributor Dogwoof mainly focuses on documentary cinema and has been involved in the distribution of examples such as Gabriela Cowperthwaite's 2013 film *Blackfish* and Joshua Oppenheimer's 2013 film *The Act of Killing*. James emphasises the current relevance of the poster in the context of the campaign as a whole:

> It's kind of the starting point of the design process. When we're deciding how to position the film, the first piece of artwork we create to position the film is the poster and everything else is adapted from that original design
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

These posters are distributed at fixed sites including cinema foyers and surrounding areas, where there is a belief that having the poster present here is still necessary, as an engaged audience is likely to be attracted to them. However, the need to digital distribute posters is becoming common and even essential in accessing as wide an audience as possible where it is simple for individuals, along with other influential parties (devoted websites, celebrity fan pages, bloggers, etc.) to share these images globally. Advancements in targeting an audience mean that several iterations of posters for the same movie can be produced, where one may be appealing to a

particular niche demographic, whilst another may be more explanatory, focusing on star power and aiming at a wider audience (James, Personal Interview 2016).

The film poster within contemporary society has been altered by the accessibility of digital advertising, which has allowed marketers to build and target campaigns to suit both their needs and the interests of the audience. The malleability of the poster to appeal to different market segments makes it a versatile contemporary tool, more so now than ever before, given the choice and accessibility of films available to a knowledgeable audience who are able to seek out in-depth information using digital technology far outside the constraints of the pre-internet era. This audience exists adjacent to their specific cinematic likes and dislikes. Alongside other determining factors, this element of choice is satisfied through the selection of genre pictures and it is the role of the contemporary poster to distil the content of the film into a single readable image. Though this has been consistent in film advertising's history, in an era defined by multiple distractions and finite time, prescribing genre through publicity materials can aid an audience's decision-making process. This results in the art direction of current film poster production being driven by expectation. When a film falls outside of a given genre, the poster can be more original as stated by James: "when you have your separate genres you often have tropes that the design falls into so operating outside of film genres we have a little bit more leeway to be more original or creative with the artwork" (Personal Interview 2016). However, outside of these examples, posters become parodies of those previously successful in the sector, providing a visual shortcut for audiences to select based on previous viewing and taste. Therefore, multiple modern film posters share design language, generating a plethora of uninspiring images which fans of film find lacking in respect for the movies they represent.

However, these advances in digital technology have further shaped the relevance and position of the poster to marketing strategy, with the distribution process not necessarily in the full control of the distributor, turning 'internet users (especially bloggers) into main players in the marketing process' (Mingant 2015: 9). Social media also offers the opportunity to engage potential audiences in poster materials for films with Székely discussing one particularly interesting example of audience engagement relating Robert Rodriguez and Frank Millar's 2014 film *Sin City 2*:

> They used so many artworks created by fans of the film, created by random people around the world who submitted their designs and submitted their ideas for a poster. They used it as a cool social media campaign plus a really good PR campaign, and encouraged people to change the artwork and encouraged people to brainstorm and share their thoughts and many interpretations of the poster. I think this is something that is happening recently and it wasn't really in trend the past year [meaning 2015-16]
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

The rise and accessibility of online media have re-shaped the manner in which film advertising campaigns are constructed, distributed and then, sometimes, appropriated. Here the engaged fan finds gratification in engagement, from creation to simply viewing a campaign which demonstrate innovativeness in design, though ironically this may be the result of a return to illustrated art and interesting design choices as seen prior to CAD and the internet.

Film Poster Collecting

While the utilitarian purpose of the film poster is to engage perspective audiences, many posters have become iconic artworks in their own right, with Nourmand and

Marsh agreeing that key-art produced for films such as the *The Shining* (dir Stanley Kubrik 1980) and *Halloween* (dir. John Carpenter 1978) have become as famous as the films themselves (2004: 10). The practice of collecting film posters grew across the 1950s, in line with the above discussion linked to the economic boom of the era generating disposable income and the opportunity for individuals to pursue interests such as collecting. Desirability and provenance is also relative to time, where the value of an object can often only be understood in the context of its history. Seabury (1926) and Staiger (1990) agree that film is experiential, in that the audience does not physically consume anything beyond a 'mental impression'. Therefore the initial value of the poster may not be apparent to the collector until the film itself can be reflected upon[24].

Stevens stresses of posters that: "the images remain in the memory long after the experience of the film has passed until the two things, film and poster merge together as a retrospective experience" (1977: 3). Outside of viewing, the opportunity for a motivated audience to further engage with the movie is minimal, particularly physical engagement due to films ethereality (Staiger 1990). The poster acts as a means for an audience to connect with film and engage with their fandom. In addition, the design boom of the late 1950s into the 1960s drove interest in film posters for their artistic merit, combining art and film fandom in a singular element of material culture.

Collecting an Ethereal Experience

Classified ads appeared in the 1960s making requests for 'cinema ephemera' (Branaghan 2006: 269) and by the end of the decade sellers and dealers were readily

[24] Likely linked to the desire for nostalgic transportation bound to film posters and general collecting practice discussed in previous chapters.

taking out their own 'ads' selling film posters. The 1970s saw the opening of a string of 'Athena' stores[25] offering various posters and prints for individuals to buy and decorate their homes with. Within their catalogue, reproduction film posters were regularly sold, building the foundation for a generation to purchase film posters for domestic display, making this an acceptable practice in itself. This growing interest meant that collecting film posters moved from a few interested parties, brought together through an appreciation of poster art, into a potentially profitable business venture (Branaghan in Shannon 2012). Film poster sellers across the 1970s utilised mail order systems to connect with collectors while simultaneously, Branaghan notes a 'small but growing collectors 'black market'', noting that during the official production of film posters that: "a couple of hundred spare copies would have found their way into the hands of the half-dozen casual dealers" (2006: 16-17). In 1973 'Movie Jumble', a film poster convention organised by graphic designer Marilyn O'Neons, attempted to bring together dealers and collectors in a physical space. The events success led to it being held up to twice a year in larger scale venues. This continued into the 1990s where some conventions held up to 160 individual sellers tables (2006: 271).

Film poster collecting reached a peak in the 1990s when renowned auction house Christie's held its first dedicated film poster auction in the US, a successful sale leading to the Christie's UK to offer a similar auction in March 1995. In Christie's second dedicated film poster sale (1991) a poster for the 1933 film *King Kong* (dir. M. Cooper and E. Schoedsack) sold for £57,000.00, a record at the time but one which pales in comparison to the current figures where when an original poster for Metropolis (dir. F. Lang 1927) sold in 2005 for $690,000.00[26]. The historical provenance of these posters,

[25] Founded in 1964, this string of 'art retailers' made its name in the 70s after the success of images such as the 'Tennis Girl' and 'L'Enfant' (a black and white image of a muscular man holding a baby).

[26] Supposedly bought by actor Leonardo DiCaprio

along with their natural scarcity, is likely responsible for their desirability, reinforcing their cultural value bound somewhat to their historic relevance.

Branaghan (2006) notes that collecting practices shifted after the millennium, citing eBay as becoming instrumental to seller and buyer alike, bringing together posters and collectors worldwide. This accessibility alongside the ease of transaction influenced the pricing of film posters, as more common posters became easier to obtain, the prices dropped accordingly. The transparency of the online auction also allowed/allows keen collectors to chart prices paid for objects, meaning no poster collector was willing to pay more than 'market price'. Websites such as emovieposter.com host and record auction sales/prices, with movieposterscollectors.guide and learnaboutmovieposters.com including detailed information about how to authenticate movie posters, as well as noting reputable sellers. This offers collectors the opportunity to quickly find price history and information as to how common a poster may appear for sale, and where it might be available. This instantaneous knowledge of the marketplace can be useful in keeping the market buoyant but also fair. That said, scarcer posters have maintained their desirability and chains of eCommerce allowed those with such works to connect with more affluent collectors than ever before. Film posters, particularly those only available in small numbers due to age or limited runs, have now become increasingly speculative items for collectors. This can be related to what Staiger refers to as a 'Culture of Consumption:

> For one thing, a ‘’culture of consumption’’ is defined by a new self-image: whereas people once classified themselves by their occupation they now distinguish themselves by life-styles associated with the products they consume
>
> (1990: 22)

Staiger states that consumers can construct their own opinions of their own identity, which can be influenced by the films they choose to watch and, in this case, the posters they display. The film poster marketplace now exists as a product of consumption culture alongside a growing need for individuals to define identities through consumption. The values of these posters, economic or otherwise, further impact these notions of generating identity through collecting practice, where gathering film posters can emphasise the individual’s affiliation to cinema, and their interest is visual culture.

The global reach of film generated a need for different artwork produced for different geographies, with some produced in extremely limited quantities and in arresting styles which encourage collectability. In particular, new post-WWII Soviet countries entering (re-entering) the wider film marketplace saw the artwork for imported films often substantially altered. A result of widespread political beliefs (and pressures) and clashes of culture between these countries and the democratic allied nations where many of these films originated. Poland in particular is responsible for a significant legacy of different, unique and often surreal posters crafted for well-known movies in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. These designs found their basis in local conventions as: “the art form is closely related to a folk tradition of bright colour, well defined shapes, with a witty calligraphic style” (Stevens 1977:1). These examples have become widely culturally desirable, acting as cornerstones of exhibitions of

European film poster art. This, alongside scarcity and style has similarly engaged collectors, offering a different perspective on cinema and perhaps contrived as the first definitive example of an Alternative Movie Poster.

In recent years, modern technology and methods of distribution have allowed studios to target audiences with particular poster designs/teaser campaigns, where the artwork itself may aim to be particularly personal to their identity (James; Székely Personal Interview 2016). This has led to these examples being more desirable to contemporary collectors who often reject most modern studio posters due to their lack of artistic rigour (Branaghan 2006). For example, the relatively recent release of the 2018 sequel *Deadpool 2* (dir. David Leitch) saw posters parodying the infamous 'chair shower' from *Flashdance* (dir. Adrian Lyne 1983), emphasising the referential nature of the films content and character, which knowing fans would respond positively to.

The history of the film poster and the variety produced for each film, provides a unique opportunity for collectors to search for and acquire images based on their own likes, representative of their personalities. This is linked to the motivations of the 'fan collector' which while not ignored within academia (Geraghty 2014; 2018; Jenkins 2020) leaves room for specific focus. While collecting as identity is important other motivations to collect film posters, e.g. for speculative reasons, also need further contextual consideration (Branaghan 2006).

It is in this time, when the ability for traders and collectors to conduct business has never been more straightforward, that we start to see the dynamics of the economies linked to film poster collecting. There are few barriers to entry as posters themselves are easy to access and store, making film poster collecting accessible. Buying posters no longer requires collectors to physically visit specialist stores, or hunt

conventions, or cinema archives[27]. Now, through the facilitation of online chains of commerce, two individuals can exchange cash for goods with little personal interaction, and with no (or very few) geographic limitations. Search functions and the ability to list the titles of film posters for SEO[28], systematically brings together motivated buyers and sellers. This increase in digital facilitation has shifted collecting practices and strategies, giving rise to address contemporary collecting. Therefore, AMPs and the various capital associations utilised by the collector to support their practice, will inform much of the discussion across the following chapters.

Craft and Posters

Poster production, relevant to film posters, can significantly alter subsequent desirability for collectors utilising craft to understand and justify economic and cultural value, simultaneously indicating the age and/or quality of the poster. Naturally mass-produced film posters produced cheaply, used in abundance and lacking in scarcity; are often less desirable to collectors though exceptions remain based on other criteria e.g. a film's cultural position. While production is determined by the demands of marketing (mass producing images for use and display) there has been a consistent parallel interest in the nature of 'craft' and its potential link to poster manufacture, where those examples printed using craft techniques, are generally seen as a 'better' product to collect (Howe and Dillon 2001; Branaghan 2006; Dickens 2010; Bell et al 2018).

Howe and Dillon parallel craft production beside consumption asking: "what is it that makes the craft object so different, so appealing?" (2001: 50). It is argued that

[27] Though committed collectors will still take part in these activities.
[28] Search Engine Optimisation

what we chose to consume is integral to our identity and the personality we wish to project (Friedman 1995: Miller 1997: Jackson 1999). Therefore, individuals consume craft to exude the qualities held within production, most notably the quality, uniqueness, and rarity of the object (Howe and Dillon 2001). The appreciation of objects by their owners, alongside a number of similar minded individuals who also identify with said craft object, give the product further status and meaning. This translates into craft and fine art consumption providing "people with a means to express their creativity and outlets for their disposable income and leisure time'' (Howe and Dillon 2001: 52). Craft production and consumption results in a combination of actions which directly impact both cultural value, in the artisan production methods being specialist and limited, and economic value, in that this craftmanship commands a price.

While it has been noted that mass-produced posters across the 19th Century utilised lithography, Chromolithography became widely used in the 1880s as costs became lower based on breakthroughs in efficiency. Letterpress printing was also common towards the end of the century for the production of text heavy posters, where type blocks would be arranged, inked and then applied with pressure to the paper to create a 'relief' print. Of note in the 21st Century is the introduction of Xerography[29], with the first commercial automatic photocopier made available almost twenty years later. Where this process lacks any direct relevance to film poster production, the concept of largescale image reproduction paved the way for innovations in digital printing.

Branaghan (2006) comments on the complexities of crafting a lithographic illustrated film poster in and around the 1970s. Designers/illustrators were given a

[29] Commonly referred to as Xerox, a method of 'dry photocopying' patented by Carlson in 1942

private screening of the film and received stills from the film often featuring lead actors and actresses for reference purposes. Initial designs (sketches and thumbnails) proposed to the film production company's executive for selection. After the design choice has been made, final inks and colouring can take place. This can be done by different artists and although the timing can vary, the painting alone can take two to three days. Once final artwork had been approved the poster could be printed. In the UK, the production of up to 3000 copies was not unusual and printing being time-consuming affair. Initially, the artwork would be photographed four times with different filters, allowing negatives to be created for the four colour separations that would be needed to 'layer' the final print. These were black, yellow, red and blue (not too dissimilar to the modern variation of CMYK printing), with all four negatives needing to be returned to positives, allowing for four metal printing plates to be created. Each poster is printed using all four plates before the finished image is ready for display. Given the length and complicatedness of this process, it is easy to see why digital printing has become a more realistic means of production in recent decades.

Screenprinting is integral to this thesis and AMP production, and although screenprinting has existed for around 1000 years, with modern techniques being developed in the early 20th century, its use within commercial film poster production is relatively rare. While its initial utility was usurped by more efficient methods, screenprinting began to be utilised as a creative craft medium by a. number of modern, mid 21st Century artists:

> Printmaking – silk-screening in particular – was appropriated by artists such as Rauschenberg and Warhol for new works on canvas, and 'combined' with painting and installation pieces
>
> (Saunders and Miles 2006: 8)

This cemented screenprinting as less a practical method of mass production and more a valued craft process within the UK and US art market. While rare, a small number of film posters were screenprinted for distribution across international cinema in the 1960s[30], but were often crudely produced based on the original poster artwork (Branaghan 2015). The reasoning relates to the low cost of reproducing poor screenprints compared to the process and equipment needed for a lithographic run.

Good quality screenprints are produced across several stages that allow the printer to reproduce a number of 'high-end' prints, ideal for producing editions in the hundreds. First, a suitable fabric sheet (traditionally silk) has the desired images transferred to it, either via stencilling or by using light reactive gelatine painted onto the fabric before an image is added and then exposed to light. The fabric is then washed with the sections not covered by the image remaining to produce a stencil. Paint is then 'pulled' through the membranous fabric onto the printable surface (usually paper), creating a layer. Screens and layers are applied one on top of the next to produce a full image. Although screenprinting can now be relatively automated, it is still a skilled process with a number of variables related to quality control and efficiency. Where machines have eased elements (the literal 'pulling' of a print), these innovations are countered against demands for the use of specialised inks, more layers, a variety of coloured and textured papers, etc. reinforcing the artistic merits of screenprinting as a craft (Oliver 2004) but also the screenprinter as a knowledgeable craftsperson (Stromquist 2004).

Aside from the advent of laser printing in the mid-1970s, the main advancement in printing over the last 50 years is in digital reproduction ultimately leading to an opportunity to produce high quality digital prints, often termed Giclée prints.

[30] Branaghan refers to the Giallo films of Italy in particular

Innovations in inkjet printing has increased the overall quality of the giclee, with the potential to now utilise archival inks. Although the pricing compared to other printing techniques can vary, it can be a potentially cost-effective method of producing high quality, fine art prints and imagery, most often are the closest representation of the original artwork as the master image. In recent history, computing has led the way to a decrease in skilled craft labour (Banks 2010), though this is not the result of digital methods of production alone. Many aspects of the skilled labour associated with craft production, including printing, had been nullified and devalued through the general automation of creative processes (Wallace and Kalleberg 1982). However, when new methods have emerged they often require their own set of skills. A printer of Giclée would be expected to understand photo-manipulation software, the process of accurately scanning/photographing original work, and adjusting digital files in order to reproduce prints as close to the original artwork as possible. While traditional techniques may be deemed inefficient for some purposes, they have the potential to attain further positive values due to their relative scarcity, with the digital turn initiating the revival of a number of craft processes (Luckman and Thomas 2018).

Though high-quality digital printing allows for accurate reproduction it is not necessarily the preferred medium of artists given the apparent lack of craft process detracting from the artistic value of the final product (Rosenfield 2003) even questioning the artistic authenticity of the Giclee versus other methods (Oliver 2004). Screenprinting and letter press (amongst others) are still widely used by traditional artists but also by those that work through contemporary methods and/or digital means. These processes embody and imbue cultural value through process and with the abundance of images available online, the physical craft print retains its distinction, particularly against ‘factory style production’ (Banks 2010: 310). Dickens (2010) notes

a select group of collectors who purchase screenprinted reproductions of the work of street artists, where the 'handmade' element of production adds authenticity to the cultural and economic appeal of the print, often adding uniqueness as a by-product of the imperfect artisanal printing process. These prints are given "an important 'crafted' quality in between a machine print and an original, one off piece of art" (Dickens 2010: 66).

Desirability of nuanced production exists across the niche marketplace where the craft product "may not have a more universal appeal. It is sufficient that is appreciated, valued and consumed within a community of like-minded people" (Howe and Dillon 2001: 55). The field bound to the actions of the community towards craft inevitably controls and dictates the politics and economics of the (their) market. This is seen in the traditional art gallery, where 'pieces' for sale to a potentially exclusive marketplace are no politically different to contemporary craft produce and its appeal to a similarly exclusive community of invested individuals. The consumption of these objects by these interested parties who are knowledgeable and passionate within their field, exists in parallel to the fine art collector invested in their market. Within the AMP field, these interested parties are the collectors, and as a movement it is easy to draw parallels with the aforementioned street art print community that Dicken's discusses where the collector exists as "a super-consumer with a significant personal and financial investment in the scene" (2010: 73). Here the craft elements of the AMP are often utilised to justify the investment in both time and finances to obtain, archive and display these posters. The rich history of posters cultural value, gives the poster credence a medium, ultimately relayed to the subject matter of film, raising its esteem in the eyes of collectors and paying reverence to those films bound to a collector's interest and identity. The advent of ecommerce has allowed these collectors to reach,

and be reached by, producers and galleries in a way not seen before the digital turn. Now niche artisanal craft production (i.e. AMPs) has access to an international marketplace of motivated collectors.

The poster is versatile in its utilitarian usage and in the values attached to it as a material artefact, akin to social, cultural and economic capital associations dictated by the audience, the individual, the producer and the marketplace. These values shift relative to design, history, subject matter, provenance and production, with all of these elements bound to the history of the poster. These same elements are at play within the AMP, where production values revolve around craft printing, artistic integrity is integral to the AMP, and these prints represent a significant variety of popular texts, each with their own potential subjective value to be utilised by the collector.

Initially AMPs are produced to imbue the artistic qualities affiliated to the film posters history prior to CAD. Brock Higgins of production company Skuzzles comments that: “We want to do projects that we’re passionate about and we want it to be hopefully be the best poster of that title being represented, to do it justice” (Personal Interview 2016). This notion of ‘doing it justice’ pays reverence to the passion fans dedicate to film, where James Henshaw of Vice Press states: “Collectors are movie buffs, who have a high cinema culture, who live for that”, necessitating enhanced production throughout the AMP creative process. James Park of Black Dragon Press links back to this: “Even the artists I have spoken to, the vast majority prefer it to be a screenprint because of the craft of it, the quality. For them it is exciting to see their work screenprinted as opposed to a glorified photocopy”, testifying to the value imbued within the craft of screenprinting and adopted by the AMP. This process becomes an anticipated element of the field, where any alternative to screenprinting is often

rejected by the collector. Ultimately this is reflective of the process where Jack Durieux of Nautilus Art Prints comments: “To touch it, to feel it, once they see it it’s like ‘wow, I have to have this’. It’s like crack, once you try it it’s difficult to not want more”.

These comments provide a brief initial basis regarding the desirability of the AMP as a result of production. This notably increases potential capital associations, adding value which a collector may utilise to legitimise and justify the importance of the poster to them as an individual, but also within a wider social context beyond the natural value that comes with the age of an object, i.e. an original film poster. While suggested here against the content from producer, the final two chapters will further deconstruct notions of value and capital attached to AMPs as objects and collectibles, demonstrating that these posters have value but also that these values can be manifest through production and reappropriated by collectors, thus making them an interesting example of tangible film ephemera produced and collected in the digital modern era.

Chapter 5 – The Value of Production

The Bourdieusian Collector and the Alternative Movie Poster

This chapter begins to fully question and define the values imbued within AMPs that are in-turn valued by the collector, utilising the materials outlined in the previous chapters to further facilitate a discussion surrounding the motivations for collecting, art/print appreciation and an interest in pop culture (predominantly film). The concept that collecting as a pursuit can be seen as irrational, initially causes conflict for the collector, and while they may find personal gratification within the practice, there lies a need to further justify these actions against the perceptions of others (Danet and Katriel 1994; McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004; Carey 2008; Spaid 2018; Dillon 2019). This is mirrored in the comments of the collectors interviewed as part of this thesis, where they find difficulty in giving a definitive response as to exactly why they collect. Similarly, popular culture can be considered a 'lowbrow' interest when pitted against traditional notions of 'culture'. Passion demonstrated towards certain aspects of popular culture have previously been considered childish, particularly when exponentiated by the practice of collecting related objects (Geraghty 2014), regardless of the apparent growth of adult orientated merchandise and increased subject interest amongst a wide and varied audience (Heljakka 2017). The impassioned fan of varying ages and backgrounds, needs a point of contact with their chosen text/s (Jenkins 2008; Geraghty 2014; 2018), something increasingly more difficult for those whose interests lie in film, where the digital age has led to a decrease in tangible touchpoints (e.g. VHS, DVD's, Blu-Ray, traditional marketing materials, toys and merchandise) (Klinger 2006; Heljakka 2017). With this in mind, and given that the growth of this field suggesting a societal shift in perceptions of popular culture, a new marketplace of related 'instant collectibles' has surfaced. That said, these items still risk being judged

as culturally inferior as they lack the necessary provenance which is often associated with more traditional values attributed to collecting, whilst still representing lowbrow, potentially immature interests (McAlister, Cornwell and Cornain 2011; Geraghty 2014; 2018; Cross 2015; Heljakka 2016).

AMP production values, in line with the existing cultural appreciation associated with the field of 'art', become important in justifying the collector's decision to collect AMPs. The foundation of these fields is built upon a historically proven set of cultural and economic values, which can often be appropriated by the collector through collecting as practice (Bourdieu 1984). These values become integral in defining how collectors establish and demonstrate taste and how they prove their practice (i.e. the choice to collect) to be meaningful in the eyes of others as well as to themselves. Jenkins has previously utilised the work of Pierre Bourdieu to discuss a similar phenomenon in how fans demonstrate taste within their chosen field while maintaining distance from traditional notions of high-brow interests where: "concepts of "good taste" appropriate conduct, or aesthetic merit are not natural or universal; rather, they are rooted in social experience and reflect particular class interests" (2008: 431). Within the case of 'fans' and AMP collectors, the value of taste as a concept is integral, but how taste is represented through collecting motivations in practice, and how it is given precedence within the field moves away from traditional 'good taste' (Bourdieu 1979). This is achieved within AMP collecting through participants placing the objects (and texts) of the collector's practice on the same pedestal as conventional cultural fields would judge fine art, or great works of literature, illustrated by James Henshaw Co-founder of Vice press, who comments that AMP producers have: "approached pop culture art from the standpoint of a traditional gallery" (Personal Interview 2016). For Jenkins, and for AMP collectors, their field (and their culture) "muddies those

boundaries" of taste, but where Jenkins associates fans with subject matter that he determines to be lowbrow and bad taste (a point often championed by the agent within the respective field), AMP collectors seek to straddle between low and highbrow, by appreciating the same texts Jenkins might cite (popular or cult cinema for example) but relying on the production practices associated with AMPs to elevate their status and value, in turn legitimising both their interest in film and their collecting activities.

The value of production was eluded to in the conclusion of the previous chapter in that screenprinting AMPs is integral to the producer, collector and the field. Collector D comments that "the artist does his part, but the screenprinter brings their own elements to it, while Collector F states "it's done in layers, like a painting, as opposed to printing an image all at once"[1]. These points honing in on the artistic quality and craftmanship imbued in screenprinting generating a distinction between AMPs and other alternatives while raising the potential cultural relevance of the AMP as a craft produced artwork. Collector D supports this: "a digital print is easily reproduced but a screenprint is not", meaning the screenprint adds a unique quality to the AMP unmatched by other printing formats. Gallery owner/producer James Park notes that it is integral to production:

> If I released a poster as a giclee as opposed to a screenprint, there would be a whole bunch of collectors who wouldn't buy it, they just wouldn't. The collectors, they care, and they wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole if it wasn't a screenprint
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

The importance that collectors assign to this element of practice is instrumental in legitimising collecting habits for the individual and as such it appears as a consistent

[1] As not to disrupt the flow of the chapters, most citation from interviews with collectors (as opposed to gatekeepers/producers) will not be cited in text, with all research taking place in 2018. Audio recordings of interviews can be made available if needed.

interest throughout these final chapters given that it is paramount to the field itself. The reason for this is that through this one process several elements are embedded which individually become important to the collector. Firstly, it naturally limits the number of prints being produced and therefore promotes scarcity. Secondly, as it is a labour-intensive craft process it adds further value to the print as an artefact while demonstrating a level of care for the subject matter. Finally, it also further integrates notions of fine art practice while tangibly marking a definitive distinction between AMPs and other film poster ephemera. Therefore, while multiple other processes still impact the values assigned to the AMP, screenprinting as the main differentiator is interwoven across the analysis to follow.

The link between low and highbrow has been previously discussed within academia, including in relation to the wider field of popular culture and film (Dyer and Vincendeau 1992; Holbrook, Weiss and Habich 2004; Bonila 2006; Walser 2006), with the term ‘nobrow’ being mobilised as a method of identifying texts which overlap said boundaries (Swirski and Vanhanen 2017). What is generally agreed is that those who exist within the field will subjectively determine the cultural value they assign to the texts within it, which in turn can become a shared opinion within the community. These texts and values may then permeate wider culture, such as comic books/graphic novels (Smoodin 1992; Rehn 2008). This thesis does not aim to discuss the nuances of low and highbrow culture as such, nor the position film itself can adopt in straddling the hierarchy of low and highbrow. What is of relevance is that the collector utilises the production values of the AMP to establish cultural value which is transferable to the subject matter represented. Fandom, particularly film fandom (the subjectivity of cultural hierarchy notwithstanding) can be, and has been, deemed a lowbrow interest

across wider society (Jenkins 2008; Church 2015), and the AMP collector seeks to circumvent these assumptions by paralleling this with artistic integrity and artisanal printing methods. Furthermore, these same production values not only create a tangible touchpoint for the collector between them and the text, but because these production values are elevated beyond necessity (overengineered) it demonstrates the importance placed on the subjects represented. This is the physical manifestation of their personal connection to cinema and therefore the AMP itself must seek to mirror that level of assigned importance. The AMP collector inevitably either collects beautifully crafted art prints or they collect pieces of paper, and while the latter is arguably just as true as the former, the AMP collector prefers the initial definition in order to support their motives and actions.

When deconstructing the field of AMP collecting, Bourdieu's 'Thinking Tools' provide a framework for analysis and a strategic application of them allows for the methodological deconstruction of complex concepts. As mentioned in the introduction Bourdieu's concept of the field, habitus, capital and practice are all interlinked, and each element can be paralleled against the AMP collector and the community in which they operate. This also provides a basis for the analysis of the findings from the in-depth interviews with collectors, connecting their comments to pre-existing concepts to further organise and disseminate the values assigned to practice. These interviews revealed multiple threads as to what values motivate collectors with much of this inevitably bound to another aforementioned point of Bourdieusian consideration, taste. Cyclically, taste determines these values but is also determined by these values, with much of this being relative to the 'rules of the game' (Bourdieu 1994) at play within the field, while remaining somewhat subjective to the collector and their actions.

While the AMP collector may demonstrate interest in the surrounding fields, for example film, it is not until they enter the AMP community and identify as a collector of AMPs that they truly begin to understand the values assigned to these texts within *this* field. Bourdieu as a basis for analysis gives a firm foundation to attach these various values and plot their importance against practice. As Grenfell notes:

> All social structures – whether subjective of [sic] objective – are homologous for Bourdieu and are constituted by the same socially defining principles. It is therefore possible to analyse the way the same structural relations are actualized in both the social and the individual through studying structures of organisation, thought and practice, and the ways in which they mutually constitute each other
>
> (2012: 46)

It is in this statement that the relevance of Bourdieu to this thesis lies. His work forms a foundation of concepts and terminology which acts as a lexicon for the further deconstruction of the field of AMP collecting. The 'individual' (the collector) and the 'social' (collecting activity), are part of the wider field of AMP collecting as a whole, with the strands which stretch between the collector and their environment being simultaneously under review across this thesis in order to understand the impact of each on the other. Again, it is inevitably the notion of 'taste' which becomes integral to the collector. It determines habitus and practice; it is a prerequisite of navigating the field and it becomes the point of contention governing the acquisition and distribution of capital. Therefore, taste regulates action but also justifies action, something necessary for the collector to be able to legitimise motivation and practice.

The AMP Collector, the Field they Operate in and the Game they Play

Taste is embodied within the habitus of the individual and to evidence taste is to dictate elements of one's social and political position within society (and its assorted fields). As mentioned earlier, if a position is adopted where the habitus is informed and influenced by identity and lifestyle is accepted (Jones et al 2009), then the ability to demonstrate taste can support the credibility of one's habitus even if this demonstration is committed unconsciously (Bourdieu 1979). This is relevant to the AMP collector who naturally seeks to justify their interests and actions as a collector both to themselves and others. Connecting AMP's with notions of 'taste', assigns a pre-existing system of values to the practice of AMP collecting e.g. reappropriation of fine art collecting as practice (Grenfell 2012). Though taste is omitted from Bourdieu's equation below it underpins each element, to which any discussion surrounding AMP collecting can be related. As this thesis is interested in understanding the practice itself, exploring habitus, capital and field, tangentially discussing other related areas of relevant interest (taste and disinterestedness for example) allows for a thorough understanding of said practice to be presented. Though actions will always be interlinked with subjectivity, the use of Bourdieu provides a perspective to rationally address the values of collecting AMPs.

[(Habitus) (Capital)] + Field = Practice

(Bourdieu, P. 1986)

While this chapter focuses on Field and Habitus, with practice being interlinked to these topics, Capital will be discussed in the following chapter as it is evident that interviewees assign various capital associations to establish legitimacy in their practice:

> These practices can be accounted for only by relating the objective structure defining the social conditions of the production of habitus which engendered them to the conditions in which his habitus is operating, that is, to conjuncture which, short of radical transformation, represents a particular state of structure
>
> (Bourdieu 1979: 197)

The AMP collector's practice is similarly bound to their shifting habitus, being an amalgamation of their identity and lifestyle built upon their traits as a collector, their passion for film, and their enthusiasm for art/print[2]. Where the first two often exist before entering the AMP collecting, the latter becomes more deeply significant once they commit to practice, inevitably becoming integral to practice. This interest in film and collecting is highlighted by Collector H: "I think everybody in the hobby is a movie fan and it is very easy to join [the community] and then go I like that film so I'm going to get that print". Collector G also comments on the members of the community that: ''I would say there are less art lovers than there are movie lovers. It's something for them to connect to that movie''. There is general agreement amongst collectors that they came into the field as a collector (notably popular culture artefacts) and film fan, with limited knowledge of art/illustration and specifically printing/screenprinting. However, when this process was discovered by the collector to represent an integral part of AMP production, it became increasingly more significant to determining their motivations to collect AMPs. Overall, the stability of these various elements becomes the basis of the 'collecting habitus', while other interrelated elements, e.g. subtle

[2] There are of course further individual elements that influence the unique habitus of each individual, but it is these factors that are important in understanding the AMP collector.

changes in taste, are in flux. Like an anchored ship, the basis remains relatively stable even though it will swell with the tide[3].

The Collecting Habitus and Playing by the Rules

In Bourdieu's terms it is the habitus that informs the collectors taste where it influences and is then supported by their understanding of what broadly represents taste within wider culture. By demonstrating taste, implicitly or explicitly, the individual constructs both biases (what is tasteful and what is not) and expectations which exist within their understanding of the field (the field should demonstrate certain factors to retain the status of where it is positioned culturally, i.e. the traditional art market is bound to the works of artists revered by institutions, experts and gatekeepers, subsequently housed in museums and private collections of repute) and this ability to demonstrate these biases governs, and is governed by, elements of the habitus. In turn this provides the basis of hierarchy within the field, which is a combination of subjective and objective values shared by the community (Curran and Morley 2007). AMP collectors then generate an internal subjective hierarchy based on their personal interests which inform aspects of habitus outside of their involvement in AMP collecting, and could include the role a certain text (film) will play within the individual's life. For example, Collector F states: "I love Blade Runner, I've got maybe 30-40 Blade Runner prints'', this level of commitment to collecting AMPs related to the film representative of his

[3] Where capital is closely linked to the habitus it is also inherent in the production of AMPs, providing a point of value to the collector and their motivations, influencing their choices and becoming part of how they choose to 'play the game', a term which will be addressed shortly. Capital provides an internal and external hierarchy, where various capital (and the interplay between them) is more influential than Bourdieu's equations initially posits, conflicting with societally governed expectations of power. The simplicity of the equation makes it possible to put forward various cases for interpretation, but the understanding of capital in relation to this thesis' themes means that it requires further unpacking and development, particularly in the case of AMPs and their collectors, who utilise the various values (not just capital) to further support the psychology of their practice and to construct their habitus.

subjective passion for *Blade Runner* (dir. Ridley Scott 1982). This allows him to exert further control over a film he considers important while simultaneously evidencing that he is a definitive fan of the film beyond that of the casual fan. Collector K comments that he and his partner are: “first and foremost horror fans and collect anything to do with it. We want posters from our favourite horror movies hung on the walls’’ (Personal Interview 2018). Personal passions such as this then initiate practice which supports the collectors habitus and identity but may not be replicated by others within the field as it is intrinsic to their individual taste.

Then there are more objective hierarchical considerations, such as the reputability of artists, or the general consensus towards screenprinting. While there still exists an element of subjectivity in how these values are utilised by the collector, they remain consistent across the field. What can be understood from this is that certain production values remain closer to the objective side of the scale and these values are easier to maintain in production (i.e. choosing to screenprint). Knowledge and understanding of these elements allows the collector to support habitus through committing to a practice which makes use of these inherent values, such as collecting work by the right artists, sold by the right companies and printed in the right way. While the broad strokes of such practice can be taught it is experience within the field which is most crucial (Jenkins 1992: 76). This is the situation collectors find themselves in when analysing their possessions, determining the intricacies a collection can play in shaping the individual and how the collector can manipulate their collecting/collection within the accepted hierarchical boundaries to generate gratification while appeasing the expectations of the field. A poster for a favourite film is one thing, but an AMP imbued with the correct production values and artistic vision is seen as insurmountably different. Collector B further summarises this:

> It's because it's a representation of a representation of real life. So you are almost looking at it through a couple of prisms, so you've got the directors vision of the film, you've got the celluloid interpretation, you've got your take on that and I think that's part of the appeal for me is seeing what other people see in a film
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

In AMP collecting these 'rules' can determine; the desirability of certain artists and printing methods, the cultural position of certain film properties, and even the potential success of who distributes the AMP. Choosing to accept and/or disregard these elements, or a combination of them, demonstrates taste and habitus (Moore 2012), where actions exhibit Bourdieu's concept of strategy within the field, how an individual 'plays the game', through their understanding of the 'rules of the game' (Grenfell 2012).

However, it is rare that an individual, or in this case a collector, will consistently fully calculate every possibility, rather demonstrating the more accepted practice of understanding the rules, but 'playing' in an idiosyncratic manner, demonstrating individual taste akin to habitus. A collector will still choose what they wish to collect based on a foundation of acceptability within the field, but this is paralleled against personal motivations. Therefore, a film which may be dismissed by the wider field but a collector finds personally significant, will be of interest to that individual if represented as an AMP. They will still only choose to add it to their collection if the AMP meets other aforementioned baseline criteria[4], but they will alter their 'strategy' accordingly. It is still in their understanding of what is expected within the field that collectors will find their basis for practice, where knowledge and taste can develop over time, in turn further influencing strategy applied in future. Therefore, a collector may demonstrate

[4] e.g. correct printing/artist/producer/distributor

an affinity towards a particular film, desiring an AMP to represent this. However, if multiple prints are produced by many different artists for said film, the collector will strategize which one (or more) to pursue. This is calculated but also inherently subjective as demonstrated in the AMP field where many collectors will support or dismiss the very same AMP in favour of an alternative, their choice demonstrating their taste, which in itself is bound to their own strategy, based on their individual understanding of the 'rules of the game'.

With regards to individuals within the field Jenkins has noted that: ''socially competent performances are produced as a matter of routine, without the actors necessarily 'knowing what they are doing" (Jenkins 1992: 76). That inherent feeling that comes with time within a field developing an understanding of how 'the game is played' and 'one's place within that system' equivalent of their collecting habitus. This contributes to the gratification found in understanding the community (field), its nuanced practices, such as choosing what and how to collect, and the prospective values assigned to AMPs. Maton supports this further stating:

> Actors do not arrive in a field fully armed with god-like knowledge of the state of play, the positions, belief and aptitudes of other actors, or the full consequences of their actions. Rather, they enjoy a particular point of view on proceedings based on their positions, and they come to acquire a sense of tempo, rhythms and unwritten rules of the game through time and experience
>
> (2012: 53)

The habitus grows with experience which can be plotted alongside a positive incline against their understanding of the 'rules of the game'. This again influences taste and how this is displayed by the collector, which matures over the time spent within the field. Collectors often arrive with experience of collecting as well as an underlying

appreciation of film. They gain knowledge of the factors that further make up the production values of AMPs, which in turn teaches them how to 'play the game', which is achieved through demonstrations of taste. Within AMP collecting, understanding one's taste relative to the rules of the game, can be utilised to legitimise one's practice to themselves, other collectors and those outside of the field. It is in this mindset that the field of AMP collecting exists as a subfield[5] of several wider frameworks which became the distinct focus of the previous chapters namely, collecting, popular culture and art/prints/printing.

Field, Subfield and AMPs

The values assigned to the AMP are determined in-part through the reappropriation of similar existing values based in the fields that the AMP overlaps. In Thomson's terms:

> Bourdieu posited a social world (the field of power) made up of multiple fields: large fields could be divided into subfields (e.g. art into literature, painting, photography, etc.). Each subfield, while following the overall logic of its field, also had its own internal logics, rules and regularities from the larger field to a subfield might well require a 'genuine qualitative leap' for both agents and those who seek to investigate and understand it
>
> (2012: 71)

Each subfield adheres to the rules of the game governing practice within the field of origin, but in turn demonstrate further additional 'rules' and amendments which influence the nuances of strategy and practice. Bourdieu (1998) notes the importance and impact the overlapping of fields can have on the agent, his research referencing the influence journalism and media can have on propagating other fields such as

[5] Subfield and field become interchangeable when referencing the internal dynamics of AMP collection.

politics or even academia. The subfield of AMP collecting is relative to the fields addressed in previous chapters, the field of collecting, the field of popular culture (film) and the field of art/printing. The values that make up the field influence elements of the others once connected, with this 'borrowing of elements' being integral to understanding the practice associated with each field. It is necessary for the collector to understand the values their practice adopts in order to proliferate collecting activities. Practice in the subfield exploits relative values of the surrounding fields, which when understood by the collector can be utilised to justify action.

These criteria of the subfield reinforce any hierarchy of practice including what is deemed valuable and important to the collector (Jenkins 2008), which is exploited in the case of AMPs through manipulating production practices. Production characteristics of the subfield can include printing method (screenprinting as an artform), artist (hierarchical reputability within the field), obtaining licenses to produce official artwork (legitimising AMPs even beyond the community), the production company (brand trust evocates value), and edition size of the print run (exclusivity increasing demand). While these are embedded in production and systematically provide the foundation to the subfield, there must also exist a 'knowledge' on the part of collectors in order to understand their value. This becomes cyclical, where production determines practice, practice increases knowledge, knowledge increases the specific need for AMPs to embody the expectations of production in the subfield, which is then met through production itself. While the next chapter will focus on the subject of capital in more depth, it is apparent that capital (in Bourdieu's terms) can be obtained through demonstrating this increased knowledge in practice, with further capital being acquired through engaging with those elements of the field imbued with capital value. In Thomson's terms: ''At stake in the field is the accumulation of capitals:

They are both the process in, and product of a field'' (2012: 67) where capital is interlinked with all aspects of AMP production and collecting practice.

Introducing Capital

Bourdieu seeks to shift expectations of capital away from just economic and into other forms of capital exchange. Monetary values are still irrevocably linked to collecting practice and this often becomes the first point of rationalisation as economic capital acts as a basis for measuring success within western society, as opposed to the more subjective 'wealth' accrued through other capital forms (Moore 2012). With this in mind Bourdieu notes the following variations of capital, with each to be found within the subfield of AMPs:

- Economic (money and assets)
- Cultural (knowledge, taste, cultural preferences) and Sub Cultural (same principle but found within, and specific to, a subfield).
- Social (affiliations and networks, family)

AMPs and the accompanying collecting practice represent all of these capitals, binding them to a physical artefact. This inherent tangibility was deemed a valuable asset to interviewees, who found gratification in 'realness': "There definitely is an aspect in having something you can physically hold and look at in great detail and put on your wall" said Collector I, Collector D contextualising this against his overall practice commenting that ''I think as a collector it's more of a physical thing for me''. Collector H agrees that it is integral to practice, and in turn demonstrating this practice to others: "For me I like that they are tangible and that they are on the wall". The physical form becomes a stable basis to attach concepts of capital accumulation for the collector, where tangibility itself reaches a tipping point where it too could be considered to hold

some form of capital value when considered against, for example, an image of the poster on a computer screen. Where many elements of Bourdieu's other forms of capital exist in an ethereal space (perhaps now exponentially so due to the virtual turn), the notion of owning an overengineered physical craft object adds an extra layer of value. To focus on such elements in collecting practice is to reinforce one's taste in the consumption decisions the collector chooses to make.

Taste in Practice

For Bourdieu, taste is integral to habitus and the individuals understanding of the 'rules of the game' where:

> Subjects are active and knowing agents endowed with a practical sense, that is an acquired system of preferences, or principles of vision and division (what is usually called taste), and also a system of durable cognitive structures (which are essentially the product of the internalisation of objective structures) and of schemas of action which orient the perception of the situation and the appropriate response
>
> (1998: 25)

Any demonstration of vision and division, or interest and disinterest (1998) in relation to a factor of the field is to effectively exhibit taste in practice, e.g. choosing what to add to a collection and what to dismiss. For Bourdieu, disinterestedness is fundamental in understanding how the agent displays taste: "all apparently disinterested actions conceal intentions to maximise a certain kind of profit" (Bourdieu 1998: 86). To dismiss one thing is to assign credibility to another, and in AMP collecting this can take many forms. For example, displaying disinterest in studio marketing materials, or choosing to collect work by certain artists and not others. AMP collectors

often note their dislike of current studio posters as a specific reason to collect AMPs, their disinterestedness emphasising the lack of 'taste' in the collector's opinion found in contemporary publicity materials. AMP production purposefully exploits scarcity and rarity, utilising craft printing methods to create small exclusive print runs, parallel to elements of the conventional art market. The notion of exclusivity is deemed evocative of 'Good Taste' when discussing the value of art against the backdrop of class structures (Bourdieu 1984). Bourdieu's own research sought to demonstrate this through asking individuals their preference to three pieces of classical music, *Well Tempered Clavier* by Bach, *Rhapsody in Blue* by Gershwin and *Blue Danube* by Strauss.

> He demonstrates oppositions which show that Back is least preferred by manual workers. Preference for Bach increases as one 'ascends' the social class structure. The opposite is true for Strauss and the 'Blue Danube'. Bourdieu argues that taste carries with it social labelling; indeed, taste is a means of social distinction, not simply a naïve preference. In this case, the 'Blue Danube' has become so popular, it cannot mark distinction and is therefore abandoned by middle and upper classes who instead turn to Bach, a less-known piece which therefore has sufficient rarity value to confer 'superior' taste
>
> (Grenfell and Hardy 2007: 44)

Generally speaking, the hierarchy within the field determines and is determined by notions of taste, what is considered to be of good taste (knowledgeable agents in the field would show interest towards it) and bad taste (met with disinterest[6]), or what Bourdieu has referred to as: "legitimation struggles – competitive battles to impose,

[6] Though there are exceptions where those fields bound to gratification found in consumption activities which relish bad taste as discussed by Jenkins i.e. some forms of cult cinema

and maintain as legitimate, definitions of what is artistic" (Negus 2007: 205). The influence of this founded in the wider fields and ripples across the subfield of AMP collecting. Similar to the example above, within AMP collecting there is a definitive community dismissal of what are considered mass produced movie posters, the variety often available in a high street entertainment store which would be considered to be poorly made, poorly designed and readily available. This is supported in Collector D's comments that: "I think a lot of people have got into this because of the lack of quality in posters'', with Collector G believing it systematic of the industry itself:

> The problem is not the software it is the person using it. It is economical for studios to not pay thousands of dollars for an actual artist. People still go to see the movies regardless of the poster artwork
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

This disinterestedness in studio/marketing posters, further tarnished by the apparent lack of interest from the studio's themselves, demonstrates taste in the same manner as dismissing Strauss for Bach (at least for the AMP collector). The qualities that are considered lacking from these posters are the same qualities which become integral to AMP production, and it is these distinguishing elements which allow the AMP collector to demonstrate and justify their practice and, ultimately, their taste. Any power struggle surrounding the value of these distinctions is decided by producer and collector alike, "with dominant interests seeking to impose their values as legitimate" (Negus 2007: 206), driving the need for AMPs to be overengineered as to assure authenticity through quality which is then championed across community interactions[7]. These AMP production values are used by producers and collectors to affirm notions of taste being imbued within the AMP when contrasted against other forms of what

[7] Iterated through gallery websites, forum discussions, social media interactions, etc.

they deem ‘lesser’ material culture, as evidenced in the interviewee comments above and to follow.

Within the field of AMP collecting the methods of production are strategically manipulated to drive collecting motivations, while simultaneously elevating the print beyond what would elsewhere be called considered to be simply a ‘movie poster’. Acquiring ‘art’ (as the AMP collector would believe) is an attempt to inherit desirable elements from connected fields to appease more commonly revered notions of taste, the history of how art and printing is deemed valuable in the first instance is based on the assignment of taste to these artefacts and practices by those gatekeepers revered with the cultural reputability to assign such credentials. One’s habitus and ultimately one’s practice, is built on a foundation of understanding taste in parallel with the rules of the game, interacting with what the field would determine are the ‘right texts’, or in Bourdieu’s words “taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier” (2012: 390).

Therefore, the Bourdieusian AMP collector is part of the subfield of AMP production, distribution and collecting activity. Habitus is influenced by the traits of a collector of film centric craft produced art prints which are inextricably bound to demonstrating taste appropriate to the subfield and to themselves. Their practice is linked to the action of collecting AMPs utilising strategy based on the rules of the field as predetermined by those enacting within said field (Curran and Morley 2007) but also by the collector themselves based on their interests and their taste. This practice is further legitimised beyond that of the irrational or subjective collector through the accumulation of various capital forms, which in themselves are forms of gratification to the collector.

AMP Production Values and Their Relevance to the Collector

Taste is demonstrated through the act of collecting, with the collection influencing an individual's habitus and habitus similarly influencing their collection. Taking part in collecting practice inevitably means that this becomes a significant characteristic of the individual's identity (Danet and Katriel 1989; Baekland in Pearce 1994), and as such there is a need to justify these actions to oneself and others as this similarly reflects habitus. This is made more relevant when collecting is defined as a pursuit of passion (Baudrillard 1968; Pearce 1992; Belk 1994), giving the indication that the practice is driven by emotion, often irrational and potentially obsessive (Belk 1988; Stewart 1993). This became further evident when interviewing collectors, Collector B commenting that: "I bought a house with my art in mind. I bought a house that is going to take two years to finish but I bought it for the sheer size and number of interior walls". The implicit and explicit need to demonstrate habitus/identity through the display of his collection has dictated what many would consider an important life decision. Collector J keeps his prints and Flat File[8] (furniture for storage) in his bedroom, giving him the pleasure of looking at his prints after work. Collector I states: "I love art, I am passionate about it", fulfilling this passion through collecting practice saying: "if you can't do it, collect it". Collector F discusses this importance against the hypothesis of his collection being destroyed, stating that he would be devastated but: "not so much in the value, it's in terms of that some of them I have connected to and they are part of the furniture". Practices become symbiotic with all other aspects of the individual, with Collector H noting that: "every piece has got some sort of story about how you got it […] everything has a sentimental value". This moves beyond any

[8] A significant piece of furniture designed for large document storage. This will be reintroduced later in the thesis.

utilitarian function the AMP may serve through display and into a personal relationship between collector and artefact (Heljakka 2017). Collector D discussed his ‘cinema den’, initially noting the importance film plays within his life, in which he has wall to wall framed AMPs, around 50 in total. While this space is dedicated to his collection (evidencing his commitment to the practice), he also mentions other ways in which AMP collecting is embedded in his life. He redesigned his house and built furniture around his collection, and even has a tattoo inspired by the artwork he has collected. His practice as a collector even moves beyond the domestic space and very much into the self, a clear and evident way in which to display his habitus/identity and simultaneously demonstrate the importance he assigns to his collecting activity.

These integration of collecting practice into lifestyle leads to an apparent need for collectors to justify what others may consider extreme actions. The individual’s taste is embedded within their practice and, ergo, habitus, with collecting itself seemingly necessitating a level of commitment to a practice which comes to be a distinguishing aspect of their identity. Therefore, many collectors interviewed assign values to elements of their practice in an attempt to explicitly or implicitly rationalise their action.

Within the AMP field there are multiple nuances associated with the act of collecting as practice; speculative value, methods of archival, framing particular pieces, considering some AMPs to be more significant hierarchically than others. Utilising these factors to strategize practice decreases the likelihood that collecting AMPs is the result of an uncontrollable urge to collect, though this is not to say there is not an embedded desire for these individuals to collect. Motivations often originate in childhood (Pearce 1994; Heljakka 2017), with many of the collectors interviewed expressing that they not only identified as an AMP collector, but that they had been a

collector prior to entering the community. This still often circulated around the subject of popular culture (DVDs, Comic Books, Action Figures etc.), for example, Collector L mentions that he collects/collected, “comic books, video games and video game memorabilia”, Collector F lists: “Funko’s, video games, comic books, comic art, vinyl, and hot toys”. Collector I comments: “I used to collect VHS and DVD, I haven’t bought a Blu Ray DVD in years now”, with AMPs fulfilling his need to collect a physical representation of the film’s he considers significant. Collectors also agree that many of the AMPs in their collection represented films that they connected with in their childhood, supporting the concept of collecting for nostalgic gratification, a subject that will be discussed across the remaining chapters. While ‘collecting’ may seem natural to AMP collectors, there becomes a greater need to offer a ‘rationality’ to practice as these individuals transgress through adulthood, where there are other commitments (bills, employment, etc.), and notions of collecting are considered potentially ‘childlike’, particularly in reference to the often stereotyped popular culture/fan collector (Geraghty 2014; Heljakka 2017).

The AMP production values provide a point to rally reason around for the collector, giving the print a sense of authenticity and legitimacy as an object of importance. Where Heljakka suggests that: “clever marketing tactics need to be employed” (2017: 97) to encourage the need to consume purpose-built collectibles in this field, the AMP offsets this consideration through raising elemnts of production. The consideration assigned to production not only elevates the AMP as an example of material culture, but also what it represents as an artefact championing popular culture. Production values influence systematic “hierarchies of taste’’ (Geraghty 2014: 43) across collecting practice, with these nuances relatable to Bourdieu’s equation. They provide the basis for the field, can be used to emphasise characteristic elements

of the habitus and further utilised to gain and disseminate capital. Within AMP collecting, production values are associated with notions of identity generation (Geraghty 2014; 2018), e.g. being a collector of craft produced screenprints for films with a personal significance amalgamates more normative notions of cultural tastes (art, craft) with subjective personal tastes (film fandom), mutually combined to generate a set of values embodied within the AMP which represent the collectors identity/taste. Taste is determined through the distinctions made by the collector who identifies as a collector of popular culture artefacts (AMPs) but further seeks to rationalise the complex concept of what motivates a collector to collect, through the nuanced production values embodied within the AMP.

Driving Distinction: Limited Identity

Collectors, generally speaking, prize scarcity. Regarding printed artwork (including AMPs) the addition of an artist's signature and/or the general 'quality' of the final piece can all significantly impact desirability (Harris 1998). As mentioned, screenprinting lends itself to scarcity in that it is labour intensive and bound to a definitive time scale of production, meaning that once a 'run' of prints is produced the 'screens' are destroyed never to be reproduced. This demonstrates the link between field and practice where a methodology exists in regards to production and the collector will often reject artefacts that do not meet these expectations of the field as artefacts would no longer fit the criteria governing the collector's practice. This is compounded in the AMP market as the natural restrictions of screenprinting are further enforced by the producer, to which James Park of Vice Press notes: "as a collector it feels more special if you know there are only 50 copies out there and you have one of those" (Personal Interview 2016).This both maximises desirability while maintaining best business

practice based on supply and demand, where demand needs to outstrip supply in order to maintain interest in future AMPs. However, there is still balance in the eyes of both producer and collector, meaning that if thousands of copies of an AMP were printed, the exclusivity which appeals to the collector would be lost and as such the entire run decreases across its various values.

The common association between AMPs and limited-edition fine art prints has instils an element of wider cultural resonance, where the field of fine art has created expectations in regards to printing practices. Collectors choose to show distain for 'unlimited' alternatives as they do not pertain to these underlying values achieved through overlapping fields of AMPs and fine art/craft. It is on this issue that Maton makes a salient point regarding the intertwined nature of using Bourdieu's thinking tools in line with their use within this thesis:

> To understand practice, then, one must relate these regularities of social fields to the practical logic of actors; their "feel for the game" is a feel for these regularities. The source of this practical logic is habitus.
>
> (2012: 53)

The desire to collect AMPs relative to their exclusivity, is to engage with an aspect of practice (within the field) that simultaneously supports and determines an element of the collector's identity. They own and exert control over something which others cannot, as such defining themselves as both collector and custodian of AMPs. Ownership of exclusive prints translates into hierarchy, allowing the collector to position him/herself against others from the same field (comparing collections) or adjacent fields of interest.

The scarcity of an object can also profoundly impact the collector, meaning that the individual feels a significant personal attachment to those items that are/were

challenging to obtain. Ownership in opposition to wanting but not being able to acquire (a very real possibility in a competitive field of limited-edition collectables), leads to gratification, reiterated by both Baekland (In Pearce 1994) and Martin (1999) who identify that individuals find the physical act of ownership comforting. Collector A outrightly states that it is in scarcity that he finds his desire to collect: "I do collect it for the exclusivity […] I've got some artist proofs, and I've got printers proofs where I have got one of three copies and that appeal to me more, that only a few people have it". His comments also evidence his knowledge of the field, through the use of the term 'printer's proofs' or 'proofs'[9]. Where the notion of them being 'more exclusive' could be contested, it is the fact that Collector A believes that these editions provide the greatest gratification that is important. The appeal that he finds in owning something exclusive drives his practice, internally rationalising his elevated status as a collector within the field where others may own copies from the 'standard' run while he owns something that is considered by him to be even more 'special'. Almost to reiterate producer Parks comments, Collector A goes on to state that: "With some of these prints its knowing that there are 40 copies and you have got one of 40 copies out of 8 billion people in the world, it's a bit mind blowing that sort of thing''. He seemingly finds his place in the world through the objects that he collects, his practice being further instrumental in understanding how collecting positions him within the community and, more broadly, society itself.

Collector H similarly notes his motivation to practice is linked to the exclusivity bound to limited edition AMPs: ''You have it on the wall and you know it doesn't exist anymore, it's not going to be printed again, there's not going to be another run come

[9] Within the designated print run there are often extra copies produced, some which may be given to the artists for resale (Artists Proofs) and some for the printer either for resale or to check quality (Printers Proofs)

out a year later, it really adds to that I am one of these I am one of a hundred''. Collector B suggests that this is responsible for 'an awful lot of envy' from collectors, particularly towards those with a print that is deemed scarce and desirable, and it is in this potential for being met with 'envy' that collectors find a further impetus to pursue AMPs. It is in support of the self (habitus and identity) that collectors find superiority within their collection when contextualised within the field, Collector C commenting that:

> This sounds a bit egotistical but some of those certain prints within the community are almost like a status symbol. I feel like that's one of them[10]. I wouldn't go purposely chasing them [meaning other highly esteemed prints] because some of them are crazily expensive, but some prints you say 'he's got that and that's awesome' I am quite proud of the fact that I have got this and it's so desirable
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

On this note, Collector D also mentions there are prints within his collection that would 'make other collectors jealous'. This power struggle is a common theme and further reflects that one's position in the field is relative to one's collection. The exclusive nature of AMPs (screenprints) encourages hierarchy to exist, and it is evident that this is motivational to the practice as collectors want to own exclusive AMPs as it gives them status (Negus 2007). This can further initiate practice, as in Collector E's case:

> A lot of the buzz is the hustle to get things, they are so limited and getting it to the UK is another challenge, as a lot of them are in the USA and finding someone who's got one and is willing to ship it with that risk is also another challenge. But over the 5 years I have made a lot of friends in the hobby, a lot

[10] Referring to owning a print representing the 1984 film *Purple Rain* (dir. Albert Magnoli) by artist Grzegorz Domaradzki AKA Gabz

> of friends over in the USA, and I think the foundations of the hobby are people helping each other which took me a long time to get those friends because when you start out people can be quite untrusting
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Where a collection evidences status it directly affirms the habitus, where the collector themselves is judged by their practice. As many of the concepts raised by Bourdieu operate both mutually and cyclically, it is the collector's practice (and strategy) alongside status, that often determines community interaction, in-turn allowing for further practice to take place and for the collector's status to continually improve. This becomes further embedded in the habitus, where the collector creates and maintains a role within the community based on their actions. Their collection is reflected positively by the field based on its exclusive nature as evidenced in the social interactions which circulate around their activity. That said, the personal comfort found in collecting is not to be ignored, as it is in the activity of collecting that the individual connects with the community but action is dominated by a parallel pursuit for personal gratification.

A point raised by several interviewees is that collectors assign further value to specific AMPs within their collection, which while literally limited, may be considered even more exclusive if they are rarely available for sale on the aftermarket. An AMP may have a high initial print run, but if a collector does not obtain one at the point of sale, and if the print remains elusive in terms of resale, they can become highly sought after within the field. Collectors discussed the concept of 'grail prints'[11], AMPs highly prized by the collector (and often the community at large), where even though their

[11] Collector B notes Tyler Stout's Akira and James Jean's Blade Runner, Collector C refers to Tyler Stouts Inglorious Basterds and Collector D mentions Kilian Eng's 2001 as being a difficult grail to track down.

practice will revolve around adding multiple AMPs to the collection, there exists a persistent focus on any opportunity to obtain ‘grails’. This is reliant of an awareness and understanding of both the rules of the game and how it is played, e.g. understanding where to potentially find these prints available, being aware of pricing, purchasing other desirable AMPs to use in trading etc. Grail prints often become the ‘jewels’ of one’s collection, able to singularly demonstrate taste and status within the community.

While adding these prints to the collection may provide these values there is a further form of gratification found in the acquisition process with Collector D noting that: “generally it’s the ones that I have had to track down that I hold dearest” and Collector J simply stating: “it’s the chase, I love the chase of it”. Collector B also comments as to the human impetus to search for things:

> One of the best things about being a kid was finding stuff. It was rooting through your parent’s filing cabinet and seeing something, or finding a toy that you didn’t know you had or a box you had forgotten about, or finding a conker tree in a forest somewhere. The physical act of discovery provides great memories and helps us grow as human beings
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

The gratification experienced in ‘hunting something’, is satisfied by the practice of AMP collecting, instilled in the production process (limited edition prints generate this need to search for sold out AMPs) but further integrated in the ‘buying and selling’ process. This is added to by collector D commenting: ‘’I just need to collect something. That chase, the wanting to collect something, trying to track it down a poster that’s difficult to get, that journey, then the ‘getting it’ moment. It’s just part of who I am’’. AMP

collecting fulfils a basic urge within the individual, while simultaneously meeting the need to reinforce other elements of the habitus as film and art enthusiasts.

Aside from status and support of one's identity, collecting is also met with genuine enthusiasm as it definitively leads to a fundamental form of fulfilment. Collector H likens the opening of a poster tube to being "almost the feeling of opening a gift at Christmas", reinforcing the childlike joy found in gathering items. Collector J further eludes to this that he collects for the "enjoyment and excitement, and it gets me away from work commitments", offering a distraction from what could be considered 'adult' considerations, fulfilling a deeper desire to simultaneously engage with nostalgic experiences in conjunction with more present interests in film/art/printing. The need to collect combined with the want to demonstrate taste and identity.

Supporting Identity

Any outward demonstration of habitus/identity is often through the display of AMPs through framing/hanging in the home as an aspect of the lifestyle of the collector (Jones et al 2009), and/or via photographs taken by the collector of their collections which are then disseminated digitally through forums and 'group pages' (often via Facebook). These photographs can be of framed or unframed AMPs and are inevitably utilised to further demonstrate status and taste, evidencing one's cultural (subcultural) capital (Thornton 1995; Moore 2012) through proof of ownership. This leads to both public affirmation (positive comments online to photographs, comments from visitors who witness framed artwork) and an internal gratification based on the collector's understanding of the personal, cultural (community driven) and economic value received in acknowledging one's collection. This further explains the allure to collect

AMPs where the opportunity to display prints that they own but others do not is implicitly appealing.

The AMP collector and their practice revolves around a field built upon the principle of distinction where AMPs, which represent subject matter that could be considered low-brow (as discussed earlier), are elevated against production values akin to fine-art, something not seen in current mainstream film poster practice. This creates an artefact which is not only collectible in nature but, given these values, is able to be displayed by the collector to further demonstrate taste while giving their interests credibility within the wider cultural spectrum. Display within the home leading to positive reception from others (internal and external to the field) being the result of heightened production values. Where more general interests in collecting popular culture memorabilia could be met with a level of cultural distain by those outside of the field, production elevates the inherent value of the AMP against the backdrop of culture itself. As a result, the elements of habitus and identity interlinked with collecting are less likely to be questioned in the first instance, and if they are then the collector can rely on these values to support their actions.

Opinions surrounding AMP collection from those outside the field could relate to the practice of collecting itself or the significant interest the collector demonstrates in film. There has been a movement across mainstream culture (and within academia) where the notion of the stereotypical geek has shifted away from embarrassing and become more reputable as a marker of identity (McArther 2009; Geraghty 2014). McCain et al further contextualise this movement:

> Though geek interests were once marginalized, comic book movie adaptations (e.g., *Iron Man*, *Thor*) are now major box office draws. Likewise, science-fiction (sci-fi) and fantasy themed video games (e.g., *World of Warcraft*) have become

> multi-billion dollar industries […] in the past year along, New York Comic-Con, one of the premier geek conventions in the United States attracted over 130,000 attendees
>
> (2015: 1)

However, derogatory notions still persist, through the labelling of a generation of collectors whose relationships between masculinity and maturity are invariably blurred, where the fleeting yet important stability of youth is sought after by the individual (Cross 2008; Geraghty 2014). This is relatable to the AMP where the notion of the 'geek' has transcended beyond the fan and into the realm of the fan as a collector. The fan collector shares many of the same distinctions with the fan in that they are knowledgeable and passionate in regards to their interests, they will go to considerable lengths to engage with them, with many of these items collected being considered 'useless to mainstream culture' (Geraghty 2014: 29). Their interest in popular culture, creates a distinction between this group of collectors from the more culturally acceptable 'traditional' collector (if such a thing even exists), generating what Geraghty terms a 'fan collector identity' (2014: 29). While the stereotype of the geek still exists, they have become mainstream to the point of mass integration within society at large (McCain et al 2015).

However, AMP collectors enter a dichotomy in that they can be categorised as 'fan collectors', yet there is an implicit/explicit drive to further remove themselves from potential stigmas. AMP production values not only allow this distinction to happen but also emphasise it. While most popular culture ephemera has/had a distinct utilitarian function, where significance and meaning is reliant on an individual taking the item out of conventional use and bringing it into a collection (Belk 1995; Geraghty 2014)[12], or

[12] For example, film props

exist as designated collectibles (instant collectible) often targeted at a young audience (or could be seen to be desirable to a young audience)[13], the AMP is designed to be displayed, making this its function. It is ultimately produced to act as a marker of identity, where all production values associated with the AMP represent value to the collector. Again, AMPs are not studio posters, they are the antithesis to them, championing both the subject matter and the poster as an artform. If motivations were purely about demonstrating an element of identity bound within film fandom, then perhaps studio art would be enough to display for the 'fan collector'. For AMP collectors it is about taking that element of popular culture as subject matter, accepting it and simultaneously offsetting it against production values, which distance the collector of AMPs from other collectors of popular culture ephemera.

As noted in previous interview comments, collectors exist within the category of 'film fan', but wish to transcend this to create a further element of internal hierarchy, where their AMP collection truly represents their depth of commitment as a 'fan'. This is confirmed by Collector K in reference to displaying AMPs throughout their domestic space: "We would love the fact that when people walked into the house they would think that these people are total film nerds". AMP collectors understand the breadth of film fandom to the point where they can create a distinction between groups (subfields), and acceptance of one group (AMP collector) in turn means they reject another group (casual film fan). What allows this distinction to be initiated and justified lies in the detailed emphasis on production that is a definitive aspect of the basis for the field of AMP collecting. This is echoed across the community where collectors comment that the film's they find significant need to be represented in an AMP. The expressobeans.com forum even has a dedicated thread titled 'Which movie deserves

[13] For example, Funko Pop Figures

a print that doesn't have one', where one could make the connection that for the film to reach its cultural potential it needs to be, in the mind of the collector, represented in an AMP. AMPs give the film a tangible marker of credibility that the collector believes it deserves.

The aforementioned concept of the 'instant collectible' carries a distinct meaning beyond more utilitarian objects of interest, where the AMP (as an example of an instant collectible) allows an audience of collectors to systematically pick and choose what they wish to collect (if they can manage to obtain them) to build, shape and control significant elements of their identity. The care and attention to artwork, the relatively small edition numbers (with obvious exceptions) and the focus on craft production further distinguish the AMP from more commonplace (and perhaps negative) perceptions of instant collectibles. This questions Hughes' (1984) statement that 'authetic' collectibles transcend their utilitarian use, and that instant collectibles have no 'collectible soul'. The specific nuances of production offset this derogation and align the AMP with symbolic cultural values (art and craft), generating a field of practice championing said values (Lask 1993). The nature of AMPs to move beyond the simplicity of 'just being a movie poster' and into the field of craft produced art prints distinguishes the AMP from 'lesser' instant collectibles, while allowing the 'fan collector' to engage with popular culture. Where previously disposable popular culture objects have subsequently become valuable, culturally and economically (Moist and Banesh 2013), AMPs utilise this relatively recent shift in positive reception toward the broad subject of popular culture ephemera, and embellish the allure of subject matter through enhanced production methods. Overengineering addresses the balance between lowbrow interests in cinema and highbrow interests in art/craft.

Subject Matter Matters

Many collectors interviewed naturally suggest that the property represented in the AMP is definitively important to their practice. Collector D states that he is a film fan over an art fan (meaning artwork in the broadest sense and not just limited to art in the context of the AMP), with prints in his collection that he has obtained purely because of the subject matter, even if he feels no connection to the artwork (provided they still meet certain criteria i.e. screenprinted). It is common to find AMP collectors focusing their collecting activity on properties from their formative years, as they noting their nostalgic quality, in effect reinforcing elements of habitus built around the importance of film consumption as informative to long established identity traits. Collector C notes his collection is mainly '80s stuff' and 'Star Wars', while Collector D highlights that his prints by artists Tomer Hanuka and Kilian Eng representing the work of Stanley Kubrick are personally important due to the influential role these films played during his adolescence[14].

Collector E surmises that for him: ''It's just about having something that represents something that I absolutely adore and I think having a poster gives me the satisfaction of something I can go back to''. The print becomes the physical manifestation of an important aspect of the collector's history, which shaped the individual's identity but is further emphasized and supported through the AMP. Similarly, Collector K focuses his practice around purely horror film AMPs, commenting that he has always been a 'horror obsessive' with AMP collecting allowing him to physically interact with this aspect of his personality. Further engrained still is Collector I's practice as he works in the film and television industry. Combining his

[14] While he refers to this as a personal value, it is interesting that these AMPS are considered to be of high economic value, with Kilian Eng's print for *2001: A Space Odyssey* (dir. Stanley Kubrick 1968) having sales records up to $4000, a significant rise in price from the point of purchase.

working life and private life to the point that a large amount of his identity circulates film. Collecting AMPs allows him to represent the importance of this connection to film while retaining control over it, in a manner beyond the vastness of his combined working and private life. He notes that he will only collect prints for properties which "mean something personal" to him and while his work involves him in many sides of film production and alongside multiple genres, his collecting practice allows him to represent this aspect of his habitus/identity in a way that his other engagements may not.

Though many interviewees refer to specific film properties that they circulate their collecting practice around, several collectors note the 1982 film *Blade Runner* as a personally significant example. Collector F refers to the film as a piece of art in itself and one which lends itself to the production of AMPs. Where *Blade Runner* is firmly positioned within the Science Fiction genre, an area previously met with cultural distain in regards to be considered 'geek', it represents a nuanced, highly cultivated artistic vision in its own right (Bukatman 2012), which the collector believes is instrumental in producing worthwhile AMPs. Collector B indirectly raises an interesting issue in that he owns multiple *Blade Runner* prints, yet he is able to create a hierarchy around them, citing one particular print by artist Krzysztof Domaradzki as his favourite within that section of his collection. This print is from an extremely limited run of prints[15] and is highly sought after within the field, where it could be argued that his ownership of this print marks his association with the property as more significant than even other collectors. This is not to mention those outside the field who may also associate with the film, but Collector F owns an object which few *Blade Runner* fans do or can do. Where there is hierarchy in his collection, the value he chooses to assign may further

[15] Five printed with a white boarder, five printed with a black border for a run of only ten prints total

dictate an implicit hierarchy (which may remain personal) of how he values his connection to the film compared to others. This reinforces his identity as not just a film/art fan, but as a fan of the film, and not just a casual fan but a 'real' fan, where collecting AMPs allows him to further demonstrate this. It is in this notion that many AMP collectors, film fans themselves, base their practice. AMPs give them an opportunity to demonstrate their engrained fandom through being a part of a field which distinguishes them from the average film fan through the opportunity to collect something they consider 'special', achieved through enhanced production values.

Art Versus Marketing

While AMPs exist in a subfield situated on a foundation of borrowed elements from existing fields of play (collecting, popular culture/film and art/printing), further strands exist which could be referred to as micro-subfields, those areas of practice revolving around similar artefacts and actions which are subtly different enough to inform very specific collecting allegiances and motivations (Grenfell 2012). This allows collectors to assign distinguishing values against similar artefacts, demonstrating their knowledge of the subfield and the rules of play unique to that area. These distinctions again allow the collector to emphasise taste and can assist the collector in justifying why they collect certain AMPs and rejects others they deem less valuable (Hills 2010).

While AMP collectors consider themselves 'film fans first', it remains important for them to recognise the artistic integrity represented in the AMP. Consummate consideration for the artwork acts as a differentiator between the AMP and current mainstream movie posters used in studio marketing. Art appreciation allows the individual to categorise the AMP as an artefact of cultural value, giving them an opportunity to celebrate the link between demonstrating taste and collecting practice.

Many collectors initially note that they enjoy following and collecting work by a single, or limited number of artist/s. This forms part of their strategy when navigating the field allowing the collector to figure out an aspect of their position within it. While it is difficult to determine what it definitively is about an artist that leads to this desire to collect their work, this element of practice remains significant in determining how, what and why the collector collects, adding to the internal logic of their practice across a relatively vast field of opportunities.

Collector B specifies his appreciation for AMP artist Olly Moss, noting that the creative way in which he uses the medium to represent the subject matter was the catalyst that initiated his practice as an AMP collector. He cites Moss' 2014 AMP for the 1968 Disney movie *The Jungle Book* (dir. Wolfgang Reitherman) as the artists 'last great AMP', where Moss' output has dramatically decreased in recent years as his interests have moved elsewhere. The artwork is composed around illustrations of several characters, Shere Khan the tiger, Kaa the snake and Mowgli the mancub. However, when describing the poster, Collector B cannot remember the names of these characters and while this may be a momentary lapse of memory, it may also emphasise the importance of the artist beyond the subject matter, where the artwork becomes more important to the collector than the film. Similarly, Collector E notes that one of his prized prints by the artist duo 'Stan and Vince' (Stan Manoukian and Vincent Roucher), represents a film that does not exist. This AMP was produced to represent a fictionalised adaptation of Dune, if it had been produced by director Alejandro Jorodowski as he had extensively planned in the early to mid 1970s[16]. While it is a relatively rare occurrence there are instances where the artist becomes paramount in terms of driving collecting motivation. To this end, the same collector states that if

[16] This is further discussed in the documentary feature *Jorodowski's Dune* (dir. Frank Pavich 2013)

these particular artists were to release an AMP representing any subject, he would find it difficult to hesitate buying said print. This is also true of Collector F in relation to a different AMP artist, Grzegorz Domaradzki (Gabz). He further justifies his investment in the artist by commenting that Domaradzki studied classical art, likening his AMPs to more culturally reputable artwork and practices.

Being able to connect a named artist to an AMP provides further distinction from mainstream poster marketing, where an individual rarely receives credit for the poster design. In effect, if a name can be attached to the print/poster it is more likely to be considered a work of artistic merit within a wider terminological context, where if the artist is reputable and the artwork revered a signature will be added. The lack of such elements within contemporary movie posters could be considered to be rather telling as to their quality and motive. Posters displayed on the walls of domestic spaces demonstrate one's interests and affiliations (Flood 2012) a point which goes beyond film, into music, sport, art etc. The AMP collector does not just simply display film posters but AMPs, posters produced with a specific focus on the quality of artistic rendition. The duty of care paid to artistic integrity is parallel to the level of importance assigned to the subject matter by the artist (and producer), legitimatising the collector's interest in film. Collectors can also utilise this same principle to define the AMPs they collect as artwork, making it a more credible pursuit than simply collecting 'posters'.

Being a discerning collector definitively represents desires to demonstrate one's taste, both to the community and to an external audience. AMP collectors are very much aware of the value that art has within the wider framework of culture and society, and while this value clearly represents cultural capital in the first instance, it is also relevant to the economic value of art, paramount within the readily accepted field

of art collecting (Grenfell and Hardy 2007). While capital will be addressed in the following chapter, Collector L suggests that:

> DVD sales have gone down, merchandise sales. Whereas art, people buy into it, people think there is value in it, they are more likely to spend 40-50 pounds on a piece of art and not on a DVD which will be worthless in six months times
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

This comment demonstrates the need to take existing artefacts of popular culture (merchandise, DVDs and even film itself) and elevate them into something of cultural standing and value which will potentially retain economic capital and cultural capital. This underpinning element of the field is important as this is utilised by the individual to support their collecting practice while creating an artefact celebrating film which will retain cultural standing in itself. In essence art is broadly considered valuable, and the collector utilises this notion, via considering the AMP a piece of art, to justify both practice and the relevance of the AMP itself.

Where money may be influential to the collector's practice, it is clear that some form of emotional experience as a result of viewing the art of the AMP is also important to the individual. Collector E notes that: "10-15% of my collection is for films I haven't seen. I do collect because I love the art and the I will go and find the film afterwards". Similarly, Collector F says of his practice that: "the posters have to have a connection within me artistically", placing a high value on the art itself determining motivation to collect. Collector G further agrees, collecting "art that speaks to me", while further identifying that while some AMP collectors do collect to speculate, many collectors "collect because they really love the art, so they would buy anything that just has the art or movie they really like". Again, art as a production values treats film with the same level of importance and respect that the AMP collector assigns to their interest and

what they wish to be able to demonstrate. Art connects with them fundamentally in the same manner that film itself does, where the AMP straddles these characteristics exponentially impacting the other.

The Art Collector's Dilemma

This concept that collectors collect what they like based on the art (and property) is offset by a key point raised by many interviewees who expressed their lack of understanding regarding the popularity of those AMPs that they themselves do not find appealing. Collectors shared insightful comments not just about their appreciation of certain artists, but also their dislike in others. Through this distinction collectors evoke taste within the community/field, demonstrating how their knowledge of the 'rules of the game' (who and what to collect and who and what not to) influences their own subjective practice. Yet these distinctions are not agreed and appeased by others in the community, causing conflict in strategy.

What is apparent is that these distinctions are often derivative of aftermarket demand and subsequent sales figures, where 'high value' prints that the collector does not own are often dismissed by the individual. Collectors understand that it is the artist that often generates demand, but if that artwork does not 'connect' with the individual there is a perceived dissonance between their dislike of the art, the gratification which comes from the simple act of collecting as practice, and the appreciation from other members of the field. There is a possibility that there is an underlying desire for these same collectors to obtain these particular prints as they represent speculative economic capital (and potential subcultural capital given their desirable), therefore the collector demonstrates 'disinterestedness' not necessarily because they do not appreciate the artist or artwork, but because their strategy and position in the field (a

result of habitus) stopped them from obtaining these items if and when the possibility arose. Alternatively, and perhaps more likely, is that the field itself is built around the collection of AMPs but within this community tastes differ while simultaneously dictating said practice. Whereas taste is agreed across the community in that artistic integrity is a necessity within AMP production (which definitively positions AMPs as artworks in their own right), the manner in which this art is represented can aid collectors in focusing their interests.

Taste in regards to art and artwork within the community becomes integral to the subjective practice of the collector, with Collector I stating that: “I feel like there are certain people in the community that will just jump on a print and just mark it as brilliant and state its genius as great but they don’t understand art or composition”. This comment attempts to rationalise the above issue as to a lack of understanding regarding why certain AMPs are popular if they fall outside of the individuals own taste. To have taste questioned through the collective appreciation for an AMP by others within the community represents conflict for the collector as it questions their practice. Therefore, when other opportunities arise to rationalise their strategy/decisions they are utilised by the individual to effectively justify how they collect AMPs.

An AMP collector defines film as an important element of their identity (they are a film fan), but a mass-produced studio designed poster would not allow them to emphasise this appropriately, as the lack of care and attention is equivalent to disrespect of the film itself. Studio posters advertise a film but they do not appreciate it in the minds of collectors. AMPs, based on their production values, reinforce that film is important by reappropriating traditional conventions associated with the field of art. This supports the notion that a collector’s interest in film as part of their identity is not

only valid, but valued. The historic traditions of poster art and, in turn, film poster art, further evoke this need for AMPs to be artistically conscientious. Timmers (1998) identifies early posters as being exemplified by their artistic integrity and originality, with Branaghan (in Shannon 2012) similarly commenting that this trait can be seen across earlier film poster design (pre-1990s) but was subsequently lost as CAD inevitably removed the personality, and the artistic integrity, from film poster design to follow. The integration of artistic values against the AMP gives collectors the opportunity to suggest that AMPs have a cultural value. In turn their collection demonstrates further purpose through appropriating these established values, and while notions of 'art' facilitate this, so do the other enhanced production values assigned to the AMP.

Alternative Movie Posters Versus Their Alternatives

The AMP and the Pop Culture Art Print

As AMP collectors venture further into the subfield, they begin to compare nuanced differences between very categorically similar objects, for example the variances which exists between AMPs and pop culture 'Art Prints'. While an art print embodies the 'artistic vision' desired by collectors, and may feature identifiable elements related to film (e.g. character portraits), the AMP collector may remain uninterested if other elements, such as the film's title and a credit block, are omitted. Collector B notes that 95% of his collection is what he considers to be movie prints, categorically meeting his criteria of AMPs. The other prints in his collection are, with few exceptions, considered less valuable, often obtained in 'batch buys' or as early purchases while he learned the 'rules of the game'.

A number of collectors similarly discuss how their practice has adapted over time to reflect growth in taste and strategy. Collector D comments that he exclusively collects AMPs being very specific in his collecting practice and choosing to refrain from adding art prints even if he appreciated their content. He will only add an AMP to his collection if it is screenprinted, includes the film's title, and preferably includes credits as these elements add to the 'authenticity' of the AMP, stating: ''I'm a massive film fan, so with them being movie posters and without them they just look more like art prints and I just prefer the title and the credits because they then look more like a traditional but alternative movie poster''. Similarly, Collector I states: "I would even go so far as to say that I wouldn't buy one without a credit block", noting that they are important to him as they both add to that same notion of authenticity and acknowledge those who worked on the film a detail important to the engaged film fan. Collector E agrees that he would always prefer an AMP to include titles and credits, and Collector F supports this stating "I do prefer titles and credit blocks […] it's because it looks official". This desire for aesthetic officiality determines the depth of value collectors placed on the parallel field of film, represented through practice (the choice to collect or reject certain prints) and supportive of an integral aspect of habitus as a fan. It is considered a quality that marks authenticity in terms of being a representation of the film, and further denotes the authenticity of the AMP against other AMPs/Art Prints, legitimising the cultural position the 'authentic' AMP adopts, a point of differentiation important to all collectors (Pearce 1995; Geraghty 2014; 2018).

The AMP and the Film Poster

The AMP seeks to distance itself from contemporary marketing materials where these posters represent a paradox as although they form the official publicity materials for a

film, they feel inauthentic to AMP collectors. Whereas these posters will normally include elements which the AMP collector deems important (title and credit block), the AMP further defines itself through the use of production values which contrast generic poster designs. For the AMP collector, the perceived lack of care given to the craft of studio poster production is equivalent of committing a disservice to the subject matter, particularly when paralleled against the infamy of some illustrated film posters from previous decades. Collectors interviewed unanimously confirm that studio publicity materials have become uninspiring, stale and forgettable, with Collector H considering the modern trend for 'floating head posters' to be a 'joke', stating that "the craft isn't what it used to be in the 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s even". Collector I blames the industry itself: "Hollywood is just a business and not an Art Gallery", further citing legal restrictions as impacting what can and cannot be shown in a modern movie poster and this being instrumental in regards to the lack of artistic integrity in modern posters. Though Collector I notes that this is not the fault of the artist/designer as he considers their 'hands tied'. Collectors and gatekeepers agree that this shift inevitably led to the origin and growth in popularity of AMPs, with collector D suggesting that: "I think a lot of people have got into this because of the lack of quality in [studio] posters". Whereas the public was not impacted by this change in practice, fundamentally it was difficult for these film fans to witness posters which seemingly lacked the attention to detail that they believe the field of film warrants. The potential permeance of the poster and the perspective cultural position it adopts across wider society, emphasises the important relationship between a film's history and its poster, and a lack of care tarnishes this potential. Film itself is an important cultural experience, the poster acting as documentation of this significance and an artefact that the AMP collector believes should be reflective of this importance.

Collector F addresses the iconicity of historic film posters and their relevance to AMP collecting motivations commenting that several AMP galleries are obtaining licenses to recreate these illustrated film posters but, fundamental to the field, they are (re)producing them as screenprints:

> You see now that they are reprinting movie posters form the 70s, with the *Jaws* one, the *Halloween* one, they were most definitely better back in them days. People want to get away from the badly photoshopped graphic design, really clunky movie posters, because they like the illustrations
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

AMPs represent the antithesis to modern movie posters by harnessing the characteristics that make historic posters aesthetically appealing (where the cultural value linked to artwork has resonated across the years to follow), while simultaneously adding production elements (mainly through printing) which also lead to inherent collectability.

All posters effectively become cultural markers often collected based on their historic, cultural and artistic merits (Harris 1998; Parshall 1998; Iskin 2014; Wonfor 2015). This means the speculative value of mainstream posters has always been difficult to determine at the point of origin. Contemporary studio film posters may be rejected now in favour of the AMP which attempts to offset the necessity of 'provenance' through enhanced production, motivating collecting practice through its potential as a prospective cultural artefact. As collectors in general mimic the culturally revered actions of the state through cultivating their own 'personal museums' (Benjamin 1969; Belk 1994), AMP collectors are constantly analysing and curating their posters, preserving them in a manner as to demonstrate their value. This curation

further evidencing their belief in the prestige and value imbued within AMPs[17]. Geraghty (2014) identifies that in regards to popular culture ephemera, assigning this kind of prestige and duty of care on previously utilitarian products of the industry (he uses the example of toys from decades previous becoming highly sought after collectible items in the present time, thus demanding high prices where preservation is sensible against their investment), blurs the line between high and lowbrow culture. The care assigned to production, when compared with alternatives, is replicated by the collector in their handling of the AMP constantly reinforcing the supposed value of the AMP and providing a point of context for collectors to justify their relationship with AMPs.

Screenprinting further dissociates the AMP from studio led marketing materials published. While these posters could subjectively represent an artistic rendition of a film as a static image, they would not be screenprinted. It is this process that the AMP collector notes a key marker of authenticity, the manipulation of tangibility being the ultimate point of reference for decision making. While all collectors interviewed suggested the importance of printing, the majority of them also discussed specific detail regarding how printing process and production practice are integral within the field of AMP collecting, and how even the nuances of printing add specific desirable values to the AMP for the collector. These subtleties aid the collector in justifing the values that they attach to the importance of the printing process, and that the tangibility imbued in screenprinting specifically is the only means of production in which these same characteristics can exist. For example, Collector A comments: “it’s not until you actually get them in hand that you see they have got metallic inks. Even seeing them

[17] Archival will be discussed in the following chapter in the context of what collectors actually do with the AMPs in their possession

on screen, it does not do them justice". The use of metallic inks in screenprinting is just one element of practice hard to replicate through digital/inkjet/offset printing methods and become one factor a collector with experience of the field can utilise to distinguish AMPs.

Collector B discusses the paper itself stating that "the paper's important […] you kind of want these things to be north of 300gsm. Then they've got a bit of heft, then they feel momentous". Not only does Collector B display his subcultural capital in his understanding of paper weight, the use of the term 'momentous' demonstrates how AMP collectors view their prints. To be considered 'momentous' by the collector is to verbally exhibit their perspective importance to the individual, where screenprinting elevates the AMP against other posters, giving the collector a rational anchor point to the emotional response evoked through practice. Collector D also adds: "I like the possibility that they all may be slightly different", due to the handmade nature of screenprinting, further adding to the potential exclusivity of the AMP and marking its distinction from other printing processes, particularly digital printing.

This emphasis on tangibility is constantly recognised by the collector, with Collector C simply stating that "I like screenprints, I like how they feel' comparing them to the digital print equivalent. Collector J even refers to the distinctive smell a screenprint has, noting another underlying element of the AMPs tangibility utilised to identify screenprints. Collector A comments that these characteristics are unachievable using a digital printer, likening the screenprinted AMP to something of cultural (and in turn economic) value where printing itself is considered an artform and a skilled practice. He contextualises this: "I could sit here all night printing out A3 copies of everybody's work but it wouldn't mean anything". While there is an obvious element of desirability found in the scarcity that is integral to screenprinting, his

statement transcends this. The AMP collector desires the artisanal qualities of screenprinting to find meaning in the AMPs within their collection. This coincides with the notion that care is given to the AMP production process, where this 'personal touch' is found lacking in studio posters. This care towards production adds value to the AMP when bound to a collection. As Collector B states: "I think it's more the exclusivity, I think it's more the craftwork, I think it's more that screenprinting, even with computer technology, still is quite a manual process, where Giclee isn't". Digital art is seen as plentiful, easily replicated and abundant. If an individual gathered pebbles on the beach, then they could be considered a collection but their value would be difficult to justify and articulate.

Therefore, the craft of screenprinting is defined as an artform in its own right by the AMP collector, Collector D stating that: "the artist does his part, but the printer brings their own elements to it", Collector E agreeing that "screenprinting has much more of an art to it, much more effort has gone into it, whereas, with the greatest respect, Giclee is really dependent on the quality of the printer [meaning the machine not the profession]". Through comparison, printing adds value to the AMP further supported by Collector F: "I would put more value on a screenprint because it is done by hand, it is individual layers rather than a digital image fired off from some machine. It's more the craftmanship in a screenprint, more work has gone into it and they just look better". While collectors are quick to dismiss other print formats regardless of the posters content, the reality is that screenprinting allows them to further justify their drive to collect AMPs. It is the screenprinting process that generates the purest form of distinction for the AMP and defines it against alternative fields, subfields and practices. This over-production, where a screenprint does not guarantee a better literal

rendition of the art but does embed craft process, allows the collector to rationally address any value they assign to the AMP.

Screenprint Versus Giclee

While printing has already been discussed, its apparent importance to the collector is not to be understated as it becomes arguably the most definitive point of distinction for the collector. Many interviews verbalise that they actively reject alternatives to screenprint, honing in on Giclee printing[18], immediately dismissing it as a comparative production process. This is particularly interesting as, for the main part, the Giclee method reproduces a more realistic version of original artwork compared to screenprinting, making it the best method for reproducing the original vision of the artist. The rejection of Giclee by the collector in favour of screenprinting, supports the concept that while subject and art are important, it is the printing process that determines practice. Dickens (2010) reinforces the value of Screenprinting, noting that the process is imbued with both cultural and economic values by default of production, relative to its heritage and appropriation into fine art practices. Therefore, the artistic value assigned to the AMPs design is paralleled against the artistic value embodied in the printing process, a practice which emphasises skills which the collector consides to be lacking in digital printing. The inherent cultural value that is linked to screenprinting is naturally transferred to AMPs during the production process, inevitably creating a distinction between screenprints and other printing methods, where screenprints adopt a higher hierarchical position within wider culture and, by proxy, in the AMP subfield. This is also utilised by collectors to emphasise their own

[18] Giclee printing essentially mirrors digital inkjet printing, though there are opportunities to produce a better quality image than would be expected on a standard home printer.

notions of taste, where the AMP uses a labour intense, craft production method, to produce an artefact that is cultural revered.

To further integrate Bourdieu's notion of disinterestedness to demonstrate taste, Collector A bluntly states that: "I wouldn't buy a litho print"[19], seconded by Collector I commenting that he: "would never buy a Giclee print and that sounds really bad, but I wouldn't". It is evident in these sentiments (shared by all collectors interviewed) that to the AMP collector it is rare to add an AMP to a collection which is not screenprinted, even if it represents a film of interest and/or where the artist and artwork is appealing. While all three elements are important to the collector, it is telling and quite unconventional in general art collecting, that printing methods should rise above art and subject matter. To this end Collector C comments:

> I imagine any digital image would have that glossy shiny feel to them, on crappy thin paper. I am sure there is work out there that is done really well but it wouldn't hold anything for me if it wasn't an original screenprint
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

There is a strong belief across the AMP field that other printing processes simply have no value to the collector. This may be due to the collector's practice as a collector, creating boundaries and rules within their field to direct activity and in this rule making process further rationalise their practice. More likely, this dismissal is akin to the seemingly evident lack of care for production found in these alternative printing processes[20] that further reject those elements of habitus and identity intertwined with a love of art, film and craft printing. Similar to the previous discussion, if the artwork

[19] Litho a colloquialism for lithograph, printing process used for mass production of imagery often used in Newspaper printing.

[20] In reality, reproduction of original artwork using giclee printing requires a significant knowledge and skill on the part of the printer. While this might not be equivalent to screenprinting as a 'hands on' craft practice, it still necessitates an understanding of relevant software and the nuances of high-end inkjet printing to produce a good quality reproduction.

pays credence to the subject, then the printing method ultimately denotes respect for both art and subject. Collector J demonstrates how integral craft is to his practice in relating screenprinting to his lifestyle: ‘‘I much prefer screenprints over the Giclée. I don’t know why, I look at things slightly different, I am a carpenter by trade so I also look at the work that goes into something. I look at what effort has been put in to things’’. The screenprint demands skill, time and specialist machinery, all of which instil this aforementioned care for the final product for it to be willingly integrated into the collection which an individual entrenches much of their own identity in.

The evident necessity to screenprint AMPs relates to the collector’s belief that without it the AMP lacks authenticity, they simply would not be collecting the ‘real’ thing. The craft of screenprinting, the skill involved, all contribute to this ‘realness’, exponentiated through, what might be referred to as the ‘overengineered’ physicality that is integral to the printing method. To support this, Collector I raises comments that: “for me, there is something about the screenprinting process, I guess it is analogue to a degree, that feels true to art”, supposing that when a collector shows their dislike of a digital/Giclee print it is not because they dislike the art itself, but rather they believe that the art has not been treated with a duty of care that it deserves. The argument that Giclee printing may represent a truer reproduction of original artwork is dismissed by Collector B in his comments that: “you can see the gap between screenprints and Giclee’s narrowing”. This provides a further point of justification in that he considers the sole perceived advantage of the Giclee method is being usurped by modern screenprinting. This is mentioned by other collectors who share similar opinions of the contrast between the realism of producing a reproduction of original artwork and the desire towards screenprints. Collector I also notes to the leap in quality that screenprinting has gone through in recent years, stating: “some of the prints now,

you can't believe they are screenprints", Collector H agreeing that "the quality of screenprinting has moved on". Brock Higgins of Skuzzles gallery even comments that:

> It's neat when you tell people [about screenprinting]. If they knew it was just printed on a printer they would be like 'yeah, that's cool', but if you say it was printed with 10 screens they're like 'that doesn't even make sense, how do they do that' and that element adds to it. Knowing it was produced as a craft, it adds something
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

Through dismissing other printing practice in favour of screenprinting, the collector emphasises their need to incorporate what they believe to be a process that is both skilled and an artform in its own right, thus further embedded cultural value within the AMP.

The artistic practice associated with design and printing gives the AMP an inherent cultural importance which in turn treats the subject matter with a similarly parallel prestige. The collector is made to feel that those interests which determine a significant aspect of their identity, are considered worthwhile through the reappropriation of elements which define the fields acting as the basis of AMP production. With the elevation of production values this moves the AMP, as an 'Instant Collectible', into a position of status, providing it with what could ultimately be referred to as 'immediate provenance'. Production values give the collector multiple elements to utilise in their justification as to why their practice is meaningful. The same qualities that encourage collectability mutually distance AMPs from their utilitarian functionality as prints to be displayed, and into something of cultural significance.

In Summary

In the first instance, AMP collectors are film fans who, through practice, seek to demonstrate this, where the physicality of the AMP allows them to exhort control over an ethereal medium (film) as well as elements of their identity (Bjarkman 2004; Klinger 2006). The AMP is produced with a definitive focus on assigning value to the object, concentrating on subject, artistic integrity and printing. These enhanced production values aim to imbue the AMP with cultural respectability, standing in direct contrast to alternatives (studio marketing), and generating a natural point of distinction. It is the collector as a consumer who then defines how important these elements are in justifying their practice and in turn supporting their tastes.

The artistic integrity and 'superior' printing methods championed across AMP production, safeguard against any question of the collector's taste in relation to the subject matter represented, a necessity for the collector where if their collection's authenticity/value is questioned, it is seen as a personal attack (Baekland in Pearce 1994). Production and knowledge of production initiates strategic collecting practice in support of interests, identity and taste, where the AMP is created to embody these elements that motivate the collector. That said, continued practice is often met by a need for the collector to further qualify their habits, which can be achieved through the collector's inherent desire to assign values to practice through the distribution and acquisition of capital.

Whereas capital is often discussed in terms of the individual, how they acquire and distribute capital, it is of interest to this thesis to note how it becomes entangled with a physical object. The AMP effectively becomes a vessel for capital, where its production values, as discussed here and in previous chapters, create an effective platform for increasing perspective value in the eyes of those individuals which find

interest in such things. As an artefact the AMP represents all potential capital affiliations, making it and the practices surrounding it, a relevant case study in exploring how collectors further legitimise and understand their practice. Geraghty initiates this in relation to collecting popular culture artefacts stating:

> The collecting community is built in hierarchies of taste defined by cultural capital, however, economic capital plays a much bigger part in the distinction between individuals as objects are bought and sold and rarity increases both financial value and esteem
>
> (Geraghty 2014: 43)

The following chapter will address concepts raised in this comment, utilising the foundation of understanding in regards to production practice, and further relating this alongside collector's actions, using capital as a basis for analysis and understanding when it comes to assigning value to practice.

Chapter 6 – Capitalising on Capital

The Rationality of Capital to an Irrational Practice

The practice of collecting, archival and display, is to demonstrate a significant aspect of one's extended self and, in turn, one's taste (Belk 1988; Stewart 1999). Leading on from the previous chapter, the use of enhanced production values elevates the status of the AMP as a tangible object, making it an enticing collectible through endowing it with a clear set of hierarchical values for the collector to utilise (objectively and subjectively) to understand, interpret and justify aspects of their practice. Where habitus is impacted by notions of identity and this is emphasised through collecting within a field (subfield), Bourdieu also offers a further topic of importance when discussing the construct of the habitus, namely capital. Capital acquisition and distribution is bound to collecting, becoming integrated into all facets of practice, as evidenced across the interviews conducted as part of this thesis. It becomes a definitive measure used to rationalise one's practice, legitimising activity to themselves and to others, both inside and outside of the field.

Though collectors struggled to definitively answer why they truly collect AMPs, several comments surfaced illuminating their reasoning. Collector A commented: "I do it for the exclusivity", and Collector B emphasized that AMPs provide a constant connection to his interest in film: ''Movies are just the most amazing thing, and you can't live in that world all the time, you can't go to the cinema all of the time''. Similarly, Collector D comments: "I have always collected movie posters from a young age, stuck them on the wall, I guess it's just an extension for me". Collector C utilises his collection to reminisce: "I like the stuff I can relate to […] I grew up in the 80s so it's mostly stuff I related to as a kid that I buy now". While similar comments were made by all collectors in regards to this line of questioning, many indirectly discussed other

underlying motivations when outlining their practice. The cultural value bound to the production values of AMPs, particularly those qualities linked to art and screenprinting as a craft, were significant to interviewees and equally many directly considered their collections to be a speculative financial investment. Each participant, knowingly or unknowingly, used the accumulation of capital in its various forms to definitively support their choice to collect AMPs.

The previous chapter ended by noting that a collector can safeguard desirable elements of their habitus/identity by collecting what could be considered 'the right things', those items determined by the field and the collector to be significant and valuable (Curran and Morley 2007; Negus 2007). This value can be linked to both cultural and economic capital acquisition, demonstrated in what Fiske refers to as a 'Shadow Cultural Economy' (2008: 446). Conceptually speaking, the 'Shadow Cultural Economy' is adapted from the more general concept of a 'shadow economy' (see also Black-Market Economy), one which runs parallel to a traditional economy but without the same governance, most often including regulatory and legal protocols. Fiske directly applies this construct to the curation and production of culture and cultural artefacts. By proxy this is relatable to how cultural and subcultural capital can be further manifest:

> Fans create a fan culture with its own systems of production and distribution that forms what I shall call a 'shadow cultural economy' that lies outside that of the cultural industries yet shares features with them which more normal popular culture lacks.
>
> (1992: 30)

Fiske discusses this further noting that the difference between official culture and the shadow economy of fan culture, relies on the existing habitus and perspective of the

individual, particularly those elements surrounding the ‘tastes’ of the audience which are bound within such activities. Tastes can be further demonstrated through practice by the fan collector and within the fan community, further highlighting the aforementioned parallel between official culture. However, this occurs in the Shadow Cultural Economy through fan interactions within activity which often brings together subcultural and economic capital:

> Fan collections tend to be of cheap, mass-produced objects, and stress quantity and all-inclusiveness over quality or exclusivity. Some fans, whose economic status allows them to discriminate between the authentic and the mass-produced, the original and the reproduction, approximate much more closely to the official cultural capitalist, and their collections can be more readily turned into economic capital
>
> (1992: 45)

Where Fiske uses the term ‘collections’ more generically, of particular interest and relevance to this thesis surrounding collecting practice is that while AMPs are produced as multiples (often in a predetermined edition), they maintain exclusivity through limiting said production. This in turn becomes appealing to the fan collector and ensures they retain and/or grow in economic value. This cements the links between AMP production and practice commonly related to official culture, giving further rise to its overall capital potential in the field for the AMP collector.

This can be witnessed in an example of AMP production and exchange often highlighted within the community. A number of AMPs are released in what is referred to as a ‘timed edition’, meaning that ‘presales’ take place over an allotted time (for example 24 hrs) and the edition size (number of AMPs to be produced) is determined by the amount of presales which take place. This is welcomed by the

community as while it champions the ability for anyone to obtain said AMP, exclusivity (and the positives the collector attaches to this) is maintained. There are also examples of ‘open edition’ AMPs, those which are ‘print on demand’. These may still be considered to be part of an ‘edition’ but the edition is constantly ongoing and growing, diluting the potential value instilled through rarity. Here the lack of a timescale removes the allure of exclusivity and as a result this variety of sale is not met positively by the collector, in fact it is often the opposite, with many collectors shunning this business practice. This highlights Fiske’s aforementioned concept of fan collecting activities mirroring elements of official culture while retaining specific subcultural relevance, generating values based on the knowledge of the individual and in relation to the wider community.

While a minor consideration here, the notion of the Shadow Cultural Economy is appropriate to the context of this thesis and it’s discussion, where collectors actively comment on and discuss their activities and the relevance of their collection to their practice. Furthermore, those collectors who actively take part in privately commissioning artists to produce AMPs (discussed by interviewees) can be seen to engage with notions of the Shadow Cultural Economy, a point of interest which could be explored more fully in future works.

Within the AMP community the cultural framework circulating art collecting is modified against the popular culture subject matter of the AMP. As a result, the AMP collector utilises traditional values associated with art collecting to rationalise their practice. Collector G notes this while discussing the various types of collector he believes exist in the AMP community:

> And then there was another group of collectors who collect a little bit because they like the art but also because for them it was an investment. And if you think about world renowned art collectors, you know, people who collect real art, like Picasso's and all that, you will see the same thing there. Some of them collect because of the art, some of them because they are really rich and they want to invest in something that will hopefully increase in value. I know a lot of people frown upon people collecting because of the value of the art in this hobby, but it's totally normal in the other world of art collecting
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Where the enhanced production values associated with the AMP can offer support for the collector and their taste, they further increase potential monetary values based on practice interdependent on the existing cultural context of artwork and craft appreciation noted by Collector G. This initially highlights the various interplay of capital associations utilised by collectors to reinforce practice, with the AMP collector demonstrating capital acquisition through their actions, utilising it as a parallel logic to their more emotive drive to collect AMPs which is in turn bound to habitus. However, as was discovered in the course of the interviews the satisfaction associated with capital acquisition was met by further gratification found in the prints inherent tangibility and the self-serving personal fulfilment of collecting. These areas are addressed towards the end of the chapter in the context of capital, given that they seemingly provide a rationale to practice similar to that of more traditional notions of capital acquisition.

Capital accumulation feeds the habitus of the individual, for example, a growth in cultural capital represents an increase in knowledge and awareness of the subject, which generates a level of authority within, and understanding of, the field (Bourdieu

1986). Having a strong collection to represent one's habitus becomes important to the collector, and having this supported and lauded by those internal and external to the field, reaffirms this value. Furthermore, this means that collecting as an entrenched aspect of personality becomes more difficult to dismiss/reject, explaining the need to attach capital value to practice in order to legitimise what can be seen as irrational/questionable interests and activities. While more traditional notions of capital acquisition are relevant to the status of the distributor (cultural and social capital dictated by high society) it can also be a relatively subjective process, where the collector assigns and appreciates capital value from those sources that they deem important. This represents an idiosyncratic determination over struggles of who and what contains power in the field for the collector (Bourdieu 1989), and it is in this regard that they can seek to shape and justify their elusive practice:

> What impels the art collector to acquire works of art? Art historians have steadfastly turned their backs on this question, and psychiatrists and psychoanalysts have not had much to say on the matter either. Patients, after all, do not seek psychiatric services because they are collectors. Yet to anyone at all familiar with art collectors, it is clear that their reasons for collecting are both diverse and complex.
>
> (Pearce, 1994: 205)

Capital as Rationality

While the motivations to collect are diverse and complex, it is apparent that the construct of capital can be implicitly and explicitly utilised by the collector to offer some form of rationale to their activity. Collecting has been referred to as a passion (Baudrillard 1968; Peace 1992; Belk 1994) and an obsession (Belk 1988; Stewart

1993), leading to the conclusion that it is, in part, emotionally driven. When presented with the question as to ‘why they collect’, interviewees struggle to initially articulate a logic for their actions. This is not to suggest that collecting cannot be justified through an emotional attachment to an artefact (or series of artefacts), but knowingly or unknowingly assigning capital values to support, interpret and even understand their practice encourages collectors to form explicit and implicit strategy. Curran and Morley comment that: ‘’Bourdieu argues that cultural production (and consumption) are influenced by a struggle between groups and institutions over recognition, reputations and financial reward’’ (2007: 195), assuming that all actions are significantly impacted by capital acquisition, where recognition and reputation is linked directly to cultural and social capital, and financial power to economic capital. Inevitably capital becomes the facilitator where this ‘struggle’ is decided, integral to any debate of value and what these values are ‘worth’. While this does not necessarily result in an arithmetic equation, it offers a contextual reference point of supposed weightings against which values can be ‘measured’ and understood. It provides a logic to inform strategy and to anchor practice.

As the collector continues to practice their habitus is shaped accordingly, with the artefacts acquired ‘absorbed’ into their identity and lifestyle, which is determined by collecting then shapes future practice. Practice alongside growth represents a potential point of dissonance against an instable element of habitus, and it is in this regard that capital offers logic, where its acquisition and distribution is a consistent goal of the collector, allowing them to both navigate and qualify their practice. In the AMP community a prints economic value can fluctuate dependent on a number of factors including scarcity, a shift in perceived cultural value, increased demand for the artist, etc. AMP artist Rory Kurtz is a good example of someone whose popularity has

significantly increased over a short period, thus impacting the value of his existing work and the release of future prints. Examples such as this represent a potential need for the collector to alter strategy or reframe their relationship with the field. This is referenced in the interviews by Collector B who believes Kurtz is now “overhyped”, and Collector E who cites Kurtz’s AMP for *Drive* (dir. Winding-Refn) as his most “economically valuable’’ but not his favourite print. The value of Kurtz’ work in this instance is instrumental in demonstrating an understanding the field, but the assignment of values is subjective to the collector. Therefore, capital definitively represents a point of reference and logic, but it needs to be reiterated that the use of capital can still be somewhat controlled by perceptions of the collector.

Within the AMP community each print demonstrates its own production values which operate in parallel to various forms of capital. Economic, in the initial cost and speculative resale value, Social in the various interactions within the community which surround collecting AMPs alongside the reaction of friends and family entering the domestic space (displaying AMPs in the home), and Cultural (Subcultural) where elements such as craft production, artistic integrity and subject matter can all generate capital. While practice is not a singular response to capital, it is significantly shaped by it. This is further exemplified in demonstrating an understanding of the ‘Rules of the Game’ which exist in the field (Bourdieu 1990), where capital facilitates elements as to how the game is played, and ultimately how it is ‘won or lost’ based on an individual’s subjective practice (Maton 2012).

The relative stability found in capital acquisition across the field of art/art collecting, is assumed by the AMP collector into their practice, thus legitimises their interest in collecting what they consider to be ‘artwork’. However, where Bourdieu identifies the world of art as “a sacred island systematically and ostentatiously

opposed to the profane, everyday world of production, a sanctuary for gratuitous, disinterested activity in a universe given over to money and self-interest" (1979: 197), it is evident across interviewees comments that a conflict takes place between traditional notions of art collecting and AMP collecting. Where individuality can be contested as a result of screenprinting[1], it represents a process of replication generating a link to what Bourdieu terms, the 'world of production', conventionally condemned by the art market (with obvious exceptions notwithstanding). Similarly, the 'supposed disinterest' in economic capital in favour of cultural capital obtained through art appreciation is in flux within AMP collectors who still identify the cultural value in the AMP, but consistently openly advocate the speculative economic value of their collection. While elements of strategy and practice are therefore borrowed from this field, the balance as to the value of each form of capital is altered where all forms of capital acquisition are openly sought by the AMP collector.

Where economic capital offers a definitively logical format of exchange (buying, reselling, speculation), cultural/social capital is less easy to define yet is also integral in informing strategy. Capital is often determined by the marketplace in parallel with the collector's engagement within the community including social interaction and knowledge dissemination. Therefore, while the field utilises existing economic and cultural structures of capital, these constructs are reappropriated into the specific practice of AMP collecting. An individual collecting and/or displaying conventional artwork or even a historic film poster within the domestic space is demonstrating cultural capital, but AMPs, with their own unique nuances of production, effectively integrate additional points of cultural and 'subcultural capital' (Thornton 1995) that the collector and community deem significant (Curran and Morley 2007). Where "not all

[1] As mentioned previously, each print will likely be slightly different as a result of screenprinting as a process.

forms of cultural knowledge and expertise are shared by an entire culture; some forms of cultural literacy are, in fact, restricted to particular subculture" (Hills 88: 2010), further perspective of the complexity of capital in the field is acknowledged. This, alongside values presented in the previous chapter where an AMP straddles various levels of cultural appreciation, a characteristic of the AMP which is a distinct aspect of its desirability, makes the study of AMPs in relation to capital logical, specific and complex.

Capital in the Community

Capital infiltrates all aspects of AMP collecting practice and, where the economic triggers surrounding collecting have been previously undervalued and even dismissed (Pearce 1994; Belk 1995; Tashiro 1996), Plotz (1999) has argued that economic concerns are influential in driving collecting motivations. Dilworth (2003) further acknowledges that cultural authority itself resides squarely in the collecting marketplace, highlighting the impact of capital and emphasising the interplay between capital forms as a result of collecting. Bourdieu emphasises the integration of capital into all activities, commenting that no matter how disinterested we may appear in economic capital, it is impossible to avoid as we are culturally and politically bound to economic exchange (Bourdieu 1979). As Calhoun et al note:

> Bourdieu underscores, economic practice is only one of a whole set of social practices. All of these practices, however, are conceived along the lines of an economic model and the majority of them are, in fact, symbolic practices
>
> (Calhoun, LiPuma & Postone 1993: 193)

Economic capital acts as the bedrock of all capital generation, acquisition and dissemination, with other forms of capital often assigned value in a more markedly

subjective manner (Moore 2012). This relationship between capitals can lead to economic capital often being exchanged for cultural and social capital. In the case of AMP collecting, culturally valuable prints are obtained through economic transactions, monetary interests further validating and facilitating practice. Those within the community with cultural capital could negotiate better resale prices and have knowledge as to where might be best to find these prints available, but nevertheless a price still exists, and any exchange will be underscored by the economic value of the AMP/s in question. Even the trading of AMPs is based on the 'deal' having a fair economic capital exchange where trades are not enacted based on the simple want to add an AMP to a collection, rather practice is initiated by that desire but governed by price point.

Similarly, artists, printers and distributors who generate and represent cultural capital value definitively impact economic capital attached to 'their' AMPs. For example, AMPs designed by those considered to be 'top tier' artists[2], alongside a series of complex market factors[3], lead to an increase in initial sales prices for prints. This further influences aftersales where the allure of a particular artist can significantly increase desirability and, of course, price. These notions are manifest within communities with definitive hierarchical value structures such as the AMP marketplace, where AMPs will have some potential value to most individuals, but this changes dramatically when a collector becomes part of the field, taking note of the 'rules of the game'. This leads to them developing their own strategy which will revolve around capital acquisition based on developing knowledge of capital values.

[2] Often cited examples include Tyler Stout, Olly Moss, Martin Ansin, Laurent Durieux, Kilian Eng, to name but a few.

[3] The artist may demand a higher art fee or even more artist proof copies to sell themselves. Producers may also similarly will charge higher prices for artwork they deem 'in demand', though this is not always the case as an increased price point can tarnish producer reputations.

To use a further AMP example, artist Tyler Stout has a strong community following, is highly respected within the field and is responsible for a significant number of AMPs which have escalated significantly in regards of aftermarket price (his work often priced above $1000 but being initially sold for $40). For those outside of the community his work may not be appreciated, with Collector I pointing out: “personally I find Tyler Stout to be the most overrated thing going”. However, once within the community Stout’s work, and the subcultural value it represents, can generate apparent appreciation of the artwork and thus an understanding of the significant economic capital bound to these examples. Collector C comments that he did not initially understand the allure of his work but upon obtaining Stout’s representation for *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (dir. Nicholas Meyer: 1982) he states: “when I first saw it, it blew me away […] when you get to see them in real life [meaning Stout’s work] that’s just awesome”, and Collector J commenting that he too did not find Stout’s work of interest but something “unexplained has changed my mind”, likely the result of the capital value embodied in his prints. Furthermore, Stout’s body of work represents its own rules generated by the community, with the term ‘old Stouts’ being adopted by individuals within the field to refer to Stout’s earlier work which, in itself, is considered to be more economically and culturally (subculturally) valuable.

The Power of Capital

With these values determined partly from production and partly from the community of collectors, the individual who understands these values can effectively obtain a ‘reputable’ collection if they have the economic capital. The simple act of ownership can lead to the acquisition of cultural/subcultural capital, as “economic capital brings more status and power than cultural capital, although both together are

highly advantageous in the field of power" (Thomson 2012: 70). That said, it is longevity in the field and awareness of the 'rules of the game' that truly grant cultural/subcultural capital in the eyes of the other members of the community (Thornton 1995). This grants status to the collector reinforcing their credibility and presentign the opportunity to, in some part, dictate the aforementioned rules. Several interviewees discussed a small group of long-standing collectors who have created a high profile, respected and exclusive commission community they have named 'The E10' (related to its 10 members). Collector B mentions the group and the prints they have been responsible for directly: "I've got a couple of E10 ones but that was overflow, I'll know I've made it when I get into the E10". The members of the group must have the sufficient economic capital to seed the commission of extremely exclusive AMPs but economic capital is not enough to grant access. What is required is cultural capital obtained through being an integral member of the field and while this is one example, multiple constructs exist in the field of AMPs where evidence of time within the field is often met with a level of status, and as a result, power. For example, access to specific Facebook groups allows for members to gain exclusive access to new releases, and potentially the Artists own personal copies of prints previously sold out[4]. This is further noted in Collector B's comments regarding his experience:

[4] For example, the Artist Fan Group for AMP designer Matt Fergusson (Fans and Stalkers of Matt Ferguson AKA The Ferg) allowed exclusive group access to high demand release, Fergusson's print for *Guardians of the Galaxy 2*. During this release the group was made private, admitting no new members and effectively denying the chance for those external to the group to purchase the print without resorting to the aftermarket.

> It started with secondary markets eBay, then that leads to finding the gallery sites, *Mondo* initially, *Hero Complex Gallery*, *Spoke Art*, then some of the really more obscure ones, *French Paper Art Club* and *Under the Floorboards*. And then you see stuff coming on which is the private commission market, then you start getting into some of the commission groups. Then you spend enough there and you start getting into the commission groups which invite only
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Alongside the example of specialist Facebook groups, the rise in digital technology has allowed for multiple platforms to be introduced and maintained where knowledge can be gained and distributed with few barriers to entry (Thomas 2006; Belby, Harrington and Bielby 2009). Where this increases an individual's cultural capital, through obtaining and/or distributing knowledge, the same mechanisms allow individuals to gain a complete and immediate understanding of the various economies at play within a collectible marketplace. Collectors can follow price fluctuations to fully comprehend market values and utilise this information to either purchase AMPs at a reasonable price point, or even make purchases based on potential lucrative speculative value; directly from artists, galleries and/or other collectors. Prior to digital sales platforms, a significant amount of time would often need to be invested in the field to gain awareness of previous sales and estimated values. However, this leads to a juxtaposition of concepts in that though this information is easy to search for (Bjarkman 2004), knowledge regarding the economics of a field is still valuable (Reynolds 2010; Geraghty 2014; 2018), particularly when utilised to further contribute to, and expand, the field. Essentially, having access to information is one thing, considering it, analysing and interpreting it, is another. Awareness of how to utilise information once it has been sourced is therefore the equivalent of demonstrating

cultural capital which demonstrates the interplay of capital within the field and its importance in support of the collector who considers themselves knowledgeable.

Production values of AMPs emphasise artistic integrity in regards to design and printing. While 'art' itself is subjective, it generally demonstrates natural cultural capital, based on a long-standing cultural appreciation (Bourdieu 1979, Grenfell and Hardy 2007), this transcends into subcultural value in AMPs, where printing, artwork and specific artists are all revered within the community. The display of AMPs within the domestic space can further evidence cultural capital, as the home becomes an extension of habitus, identity and lifestyle, and is utilised by the collector to demonstrate taste through their evident interest in artwork and, by proxy, craft production, along with their film fandom. Independently these areas produce and demonstrate their own cultural capital relative to production and practice. Collectively, they demonstrate a reappropriation of capital into specific subcultural capital that has been acquired by the AMP collector.

Friends, Family and Fellow Collectors

The AMP community allows for social interactions which in themselves can facilitate accreditation of practice through the dissemination of cultural capital through positive feedback and response. The grouping of similar minded individuals on social media allows for the discussion of collecting and the ability to share images of one's collection which can both evidence subcultural capital. This is relative to Hills comment that subcultural capital is 'social status in the eyes of other fans' (2010: 87), and that an online community of collectors can come together to legitimise the cultural value of their practice through the shared opinions of the field. These interactions are not just focused on 'showing off' one's collection but also in contributing to the field e.g.

facilitating discussion. While this can still relate to notions of cultural capital it is also relatable to Bourdieu's concept of social capital. Where, social capital primarily revolves around the social interactions a person has with others, in AMPs social capital is often obtained and utilised within online community interactions (social media and forum contributions). There is an opportunity to obtain social capital through attending live events such as poster conventions and gallery exhibitions, but these opportunities are few, and can prove difficult to attend when offset against the global field of AMP collecting. Further social capital can be gained through fostering a relationship with gatekeepers within the community, whether this is other collectors of repute or artists/gallery owners (Lafferty et al 2014). Much of this is still facilitated online and continual interaction between individuals and gatekeepers can lead to further accumulation of supposed social capital which can often be exchanged for cultural capital via opportunities to engage in further practice, i.e. if a collector develops a friendly relationship with an artist they may gain exclusive access to their personal copies of prints, which in turn gives them value to other community members who would find such access appealing yet unobtainable.

While collecting has previously been referred to as an individual pursuit (Belk 1988, 1995), and AMP collecting is independent to a degree, the AMP community is an instrumental aspect of practice. Collector C states: "I think that the community aspect is so important" and Collector E further notes that: "the whole community part is just a real added bonus of collecting something". However, it could be argued that social interaction within the community is committed, in part, to further other aspects of practice which in themselves are individualistic. Collector H comments:

> I think a massive part of the hobby is the people […] it's the community online, I would hands-down, a hundred percent not be on Facebook if it wasn't for the groups, it's the only reason I go on
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Here, the collector understands the value of social media and community interaction to his practice, without which he would be disadvantaged in his opportunity to accumulate capital.

Belk (1995) notes that collecting can negatively impact relationships between the collector and his/her friends and family. While it is not the prerogative of this thesis to discuss these relationships, one frequent consistent comment from interviewees related to the positive impact of the artwork they collect/display on others. Often it is those who share practice within the domestic space, witnessed by family and visiting friends, with Collector C mentioning that: "I want my kids to enjoy them as well", and Collector I commenting that his "dad is slowly getting into it". In effect, the opinion of others is necessary to fulfil an element of practice in receiving positive acknowledgement for their activity in order to support the elements of habitus they have built around collecting. Contextually, this is equivalent to the acquisition of social capital through the 'sharing' of ones collecting practice with non-collectors, where positive reactions still grant status, albeit outside of the community. While several of these notions will be discussed in further detail shortly, this initially supports the concept that capital accumulation, sourced in a variety of ways, is used by the collector to rationalise their practice justifying why they collect what they collect.

Interpreting Capital for the Collector

The AMP community plays host to all forms of capital exchange, and collectors take part in this exchange knowingly and unknowingly to legitimise their practice. In Bourdieu's seminal text *Distinction*, he eludes to this idea when referencing traditional art collectors:

> The art-lover knows no other guide than his love of art, and when he moves as if by instinct, towards what is, at each movement, the thing to be loved, like some businessmen who make money even when not trying to, he is not pursuing a cynical calculation, but his own pleasure, the sincere enthusiasm which, in such matters, in one of the preconditions of successful investment.
>
> (1984: 86)

The understanding of the rules of the game, or simply partaking in the game within the field of play, leads to capital acquisition where capital can be obtained as a driving force or a by-product of practice. Capital is a consistent element of practice, and therefore it is often utilised by the individual to justify their commitment. Not only is this relevant to collecting habits but may also be the root cause of changes within the collector themselves regarding their interests and motivations. For the AMP collector the film being represented, the appreciation of different artists, the drive to purchase/collect, and the motivation toward screenprints, are all embedded in capital acquisition but are relative to the numerous 'rules' at play. Knowledge of these rules is equivalent to understanding the values of production bound to the object, which moves practice beyond the simplicity of 'gut feeling' (i.e. the love of the art) into a logical understanding of the collecting field, the mentality of its agents, and one's own strategy for practice. It is not just about the original text (film) or appreciation of the

art/artist per se, but an appreciation of those film properties and those artists which definitively exhibit capital value.

Furthermore, the printing techniques, print houses, limited edition/scarcity bound to printing, etc. can all be combined by the AMP collector to produce an equation, which is not necessarily conscious, leading to action based on the highest capital return. While not guaranteed,[5] this return will still be implicitly understood by the collector who has spent sufficient time and personal resources committing to practice within the field. This can allow the collector to make calculated judgments regarding practice from collecting based on a speculative return on economic capital, to obtaining items which a collector presumes will increase in cultural/social capital to be redeemed in the future, possibly through the demonstration of ownership itself. The allure of capital places emphasis on its importance within practice and its use in legitimising collecting.

While it may be considered a sensitive topic, a number of collectors were open during the interviews as to their drive to collect for speculative economic gain. They also discussed how their love of the field (and practice) motivated collecting, while simultaneously commenting that the fact that their collection retains an economic value (often an increased value compared to initial purchase) was a consistent comfort to them. In this regard it is the cultural and social capital that is pursued, but economic capital still retains an important underlying element in the overall motivation for AMP collecting.

[5] For example, now high-profile AMP artist Laurent Durieux released an AMP through Mondo (MondoTees.com at the time) for the movie Jaws at a time where few AMP collectors were aware of his work. As noted in the earlier case study, in 2013 at a retail price of $60 and in an edition of 525 prints, this print was initially met with a lukewarm reception by the community but as Durieux's profile grew, as did his cultural capital value, spearheaded by the increase in aftermarket value and apparent interest from Steven Spielberg. This has led to this particular print having achieved sales values of over $5800 in 2019. Therefore, understanding the rules of the game at one point in time, may not necessarily lead to an individual playing the game correctly when reevaluated in hindsight.

Price and Speculation

Though the pursuit for economic capital is both implicitly and explicitly acknowledged by collectors, acquisition of alternate capital is more readily and openly discussed, such as collecting a particular artist's work before it becomes sought after and develops to represent significant subcultural value. While collectors are comfortable in acknowledging this those same prints would, as a result of their subcultural value, increase economically, and what becomes evident is that there is a vicious circle between any cultural capital attached to AMPs, and their economic capital value on the aftermarket. It is challenging to determine which influences the other, and it is more likely that rather than one form of capital being seen as paramount to the collector, it is based on a strategy of subjective valuations where the combined mutual interplay between capital forms truly gives AMPs a 'value' to the individual.

Given the wider contextual relevance of economic capital, it arguably offers the most objective baseline as to 'value'. This is emphasised in that cash values can directly impact the subcultural capital of those AMPs which are considered desirable to the collector directly because of their high aftermarket price point. The collectors interviewed demonstrate a significant understanding of aftermarket values of the majority of AMPs, particularly in reference to those in their own personal collection. This knowledge permeates through the collector's practice and the motivation to collect AMPs based on speculation (economic capital, cultural capital or, more likely, both) necessitates the need to gain knowledge. This knowledge then represents its own cultural value to the collector, if their practice is to be considered effective then awareness must become integral to strategy:

> if a very close correlation is regularly observed between the scientifically constructed objective probabilities (for example, the chances of access to a particular good) and agents consciously adjust their aspirations to an exact evaluation of their chances of success, like a gambler organizing his stakes on the basis of perfect information about his chances of winning. In reality, the dispositions durably inculcated by the possibilities and impossibilities, freedoms and necessities, opportunities and prohibitions inscribed in the objective conditions (which science apprehends through statistical regularities such as probabilities objectively attached to a group or class) generate dispositions objectively compatible with these conditions and in a sense pre-adapted to their demands
>
> (Bourdieu 1990: 54)

A series of objective practices, when combined can produce a predictable outcome within set boundaries. There is a freedom in actions but this freedom exists within the spectrum of possible actions. For example, within AMP collecting there is the freedom to attempt to purchase an AMP from a particular gallery, or by a particular artist based on the knowledge that other similar examples have increased in economic value on the aftermarket. This is action based on past experience as the collector gains a 'feel' for the game, their ability to anticipate the future of how things will come to be theoretically increases. This then becomes part of habitus and thus enters consciously and, quite often, non-consciously into practice. When this ability to predict potential outcomes leads to speculative consumption then proving profitable, the collector's actions are further legitimised.

The more the collector gains an understanding of the rules, the better their 'feel for the game'. When this is successfully applied and AMPs are purchased based on

profitable speculation, the collector uses this to justify their behaviour and practice becomes cyclical, consistently reinforcing collecting habits. This is founded on the allure of economic gain, where if a collector obtains an AMP which exponentially rises in price, with potential cultural and social capital value simultaneously being elevated. Economic capital gain is so engrained into the practice, and financial value is so inherently important to the collector that one individual, Collector B, notes that:

> I have got all sorts of stuff from the early days in my flat file which will never go on the wall but bizarrely I am hoping because they are desperately unpopular prints that they will get damaged or lost or people won't replace them and they will actually make some money in terms or rarity value rather than quality
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

The hope being that the marketplace will ultimately justify his taste, embedding the importance of economic capital to the AMP collector's rationale of their practice. With many collectors demonstrating a vigilant awareness of the aftermarket for AMPs, some collectors interviewed even go so far as to regularly update detailed personal spreadsheets of their entire collections with current aftermarket valuations. This is done practically, to aid strategy in encouraging a collector to sell or trade at the right time, but there is a further personal gratification as this represents a way to continually rationalise that their practice is 'successful'.

Speculative value is integral to AMP collecting, providing the motivational basis for entering and remaining in the field for many collectors. Therefore, any significant increase in an AMPs economic value naturally acts as a marker of successful practice, with Collector A specifically mentioning artist Olly Moss and his AMPs for the original Star Wars trilogy. These prints acted somewhat as the catalyst to the growth of the AMP market from 2010 onwards and as such there is cultural value attached to these

prints. However, this is overshadowed by their exponential increase in economic capital leading to these AMPs acting as exemplars within the community of the potential for capital gain. In his comments, he notes that "Moss' Star Wars set, I've seen it go for like £13,000!"[6], emphasising both his awareness of the aftermarket and the importance of economic capital increase to practice. While this set of prints represents an extreme example of a significant rise in price, it acts as credence to collectors in justifying their collecting practice, hoping that their AMPs will similarly escalate in economic capital.

This is not to say that these prints will then be sold by the collector, but with this increase in capital the collection represents more value within the field. With this comes a sense of pride and satisfaction in that the collector's taste and decisions are supported. Collector E discusses his collection, singling out his AMP for the film *Drive* (dir. Nicholas Winding Refn 2011) by artist Rory Kurtz as both a favourite and his most economically valuable, further emphasising the parallel personal gratification one finds in the ownership of those items which are galvanised within the community due, in part, to their cost. Similarly, Collector I and L both cite several of the prints in their collection as being personally valuable to them because they represent economic capital and are seen as financial assets[7]. Again, a knowledge of the aftermarket is crucial to understand the value of the artwork beyond its decorative function and Collector G states that while he is not interested in buying purely for profit, he will still always sell prints at current aftermarket value, where without this understanding of the field he would feel to be at a disadvantage within the community:

[6] Original price for the set of three was $150.00

[7] These prints include *Wonder Woman* by Amien Juugo and *Predator* by Gabz

> I respect the aftermarket value. I don't buy it to sell it to make a profit but if the print has gone up to like $300 I will sell it for around that value also to the respect the artist. As an artist myself if I sell my artwork for $100 and afterward the aftermarket value is $300. Even though I don't get that share of the money it is good for me as an artist because it then increases the future value of my work
>
> (Collector G: Personal Interview 2018)

Aftermarket understanding is intertwined with the acquisition of cultural capital and a lack of knowledge can reflect the need to take action to gain a better 'feel for the game'. Collector J discusses the regret of not purchasing a print at a better price point when he had the opportunity because, at the time, he thought it was too high. However, this AMP has since increased in price to a point where it is now unobtainable for him[8]. He comments that he is now aware that should the opportunity arise in the future to obtain an AMP he feels similarly about, then he will not hesitate, his experience being embedded into this habitus. This knowledge has changed his strategy, the potential economic capital value not just being desirable as an investment, but also as a potential barrier to future practice.

In Pursuit of Speculation

It is the result in this understanding of the field and practice, that speculation becomes intrinsic to justifying the action of the collector. If they choose to purchase an AMP to add to the collection, and it subsequently increases in economic and/or subcultural value, then this denotes successful practice. This occurs regardless of if these items are resold or retained in the collection, the success still measured in capital

[8] *Jungle Book* by Olly Moss. He passed at £400 ("at the time I thought it was way too high") where the print will now regularly sell for £700.

acquired even if that capital remains potential. Several collectors elude to this, with Collector C even going so far as to state that he “wouldn’t buy them if he was losing money”, basing his entire practice as a collector on financial security. Collector H also notes the embarrassment that can accompany the question as to ‘how much they are worth’, particularly when asked by those outside of the community. While embarrassment may be seen as a negative response, it is not without an sense of gratification in acknowledging the significant economic capital bound to a collection. This becomes a measure of value for those who have little interest in the field surrounding AMP collecting, where economic capital is widely understood. The pursuit of this form of capital can be noted across the practices of many individuals in many fields (other forms of collecting, business, work etc.), and one which generally demarcates success elsewhere in society.

Given the mutual relevance of economic capital’s importance to general cultural, societal and political interactions, one conflict for the collector is that speculative economic capital can potentially supersede elements of habitus, where knowledge of ‘the rules of the game’ encourage collectors to purchase AMPs that they believe will significantly rise in economic value, even if the item itself clashes with their taste. Collector G comments that a significant part of his practice revolves around attempting to purchase AMPs at the point of sale (original market value) even if he demonstrates no affinity to the artwork or subject but has an inherent ‘feeling’ that the print will escalate in value in the field: “somethings being released, I kind of like it, I don’t know if I really have the money to buy it now, but I will buy it now just in case I cannot afford it later’’ (Personal Interview 2018). This is not an unusual practice where experience motivates the collector to continue to collect AMPs based on their ‘feel for

the game' to avoid missing the opportunity to obtain speculative potential economic and cultural capital. He goes on to state that he understands the risk, but it is a risk worth taking even if it means stretching his finances to procure it. Here, practice is driven and justified through this speculation of economic capital.

While many collectors state that they are compelled to collect as a capital venture, the majority also parallel this motivation alongside an appreciation of the posters themselves. In other words, they appreciate the AMP, wish to add it to their collection, but feel assured in the potential speculative capital bound to this practice. Collector I notes that he collects AMPs not just for speculation but "I genuinely collect this stuff as well as part of an investment" (Personal Interview 2018), believing that the quality of production and the subject matter will mean AMPs hold value into the future. He also makes reference to one particular AMP when asked about the prints he values in his collection, yet the example he refers to is one that he does not yet have 'in hand' (in his possession), nor is it even printed. He believes that it will become an important part of his collection, citing that its value will likely exceed £500 on the aftermarket, using this speculative cash value as a means of justifying his feelings towards the AMP, well in advance of it being literally produced as a physical object. This not only demonstrates the importance of economic capital and speculation as part of practice, it demonstrates the role economic capital plays when it is then bound to a collection, as it appears economic value of AMPs impacts personal preference towards them considered against the rest of the collection.

Buying and Selling

With this in mind, a further dichotomy arises in the contradiction that the collector collects to add to their collection, yet if they chose to sell these items for profit

the collection no longer exists as it once did. However, it has become apparent as a result of the interviews that, while buying and selling definitively occurs in the field, many collectors who purchase AMPs for speculative reasons rarely choose to sell. Consequently, this becomes potential fixed economic capital in the collection, justifying practice through offering an element of financial comfort to the individual. This phenomenon is, in part, predicated through the concept of buying to 'flip', a widespread colloquialism which manifests in the AMP community as purchasing limited edition posters at cost price with the sole intention of selling for a profit in the short term. 'Flippers', as they become known, are often met with distain from the community, even though collectors themselves collect for similar profits (Behr and Cloonan 2018).

To avoid this negative label (which could impact social capital through reputation within the field) many collectors suggest that they would prefer to trade their AMPs than sell for profit, but this is under the proviso that the prints being exchanged would represent a similar value both culturally and, more importantly, economically. Collector B highlights that they have a vast collection, estimating that he owns well over 350 AMPs, but has "only ever outright sold two [prints]", with a preference to trade instead as this practice is seen as more respectable within the community. One of the prints he did sell was of a high economic value ($1500) demonstrating the ultimate persuasive allure of economic capital against practice. Collector B, along with the majority of collectors, further state that if they do sell AMPs then they put the income "back into the collection", using the money to purchase more prints or paying framing costs. The exception is Collector F who definitively and explicitly states that they would never choose to take part in this practice, saying that "I would never buy something because I thought it was going to flip". His collecting revolves around obtaining the

cultural capital value imbued within the prints, archiving them or choosing to display them as representations of his personal interests. Though he does still implicitly discuss the concept of economic value of his collection within the interview, demonstrating that the interplay between capital is still important to him and that within the field economic capital further justifies the collection in the eyes of others, particularly those outside the field. Economic capital acts as a stringent, universally understood indicator for the initial evaluation of the value of the collection, often met through the inquisitive and affirmative comments of others when the collection is displayed. This can only be achieved as a result of 'showing' one's collection and this action also offers the opportunity for personal fulfilment and cultural/social capital acquisition in the approval of commentators.

Displaying AMPs

The role AMPs play within the collector's lifestyle are multifaceted, but the AMP ultimately serves the utilitarian purpose of being displayed, and it is through display that the individual demonstrates identity through controlled self-expression. This becomes intrinsically linked to capital acquisition and distribution, as the collector exudes their cultural capital (and subcultural to those linked to the field) within the domestic space. This in turn becomes a cyclical process as cultural capital is reacquired through the (hopefully) positive response of the viewer, with many of the collectors interviewed confirming desires to receive affirmative feedback as it can be presumed this further supports their practice. Collector I states that everyone who visits comments positively about his posters, leading to three sequential concepts associated with displaying artwork; the representation of cultural capital to others, the

personal enjoyment obtained in seeing one's own prints on their walls, and the acquisition of cultural capital in the comments of those who see the AMP.

Sharing in the Domestic Space

The interviews conducted generated an overwhelming sentiment as to the importance the impact of an individuals framed AMPs had on those sharing the collector's domestic space. This initially reintroduces the conflict between low and highbrow, as the AMP can still be appreciated as artwork by those outside the field and unaware of the practice within. Furthermore, approval of those outside the community appears to add a further legitimising element to practice and taste, perhaps more important than receiving plaudits of those within the field. As collectors rarely engage with other collectors offline, these connections within the real world add credence to social capital generated through the interaction between the collector, non-collector and the AMP. On this point, Collector E notes:

> I'm a movie fan, I like to show off my collection, I love artwork anyway, whether it be screenprints, comic art or classical paintings, I love art. I would rather have art I like on the wall than some £20 canvas from Ikea that means nothing to me
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

He sees displaying his collection as important as he utilises the cultural capital bound to the existing notions of displaying artwork and assigns these values to his collection. Simultaneously this demonstrates elements of identity, demonstrating that film and art are important characteristics of the individual's personality where AMPs provide a medium to control and demonstrate these characteristics. This is further confirmed by Collector K: "we would love the fact that when people walked into the house they would think that these people are total film nerds". How one personally assigns capital to

their possessions is always subjective, and this statement levies that displaying AMPs encourages the observer to form an opinion of the collector. It is the affirmation of others, those who hold the ability to disperse relevant social and cultural capital, that the individual is interested in appeasing. Therefore if capital (particularly cultural capital) can be acquired from others, then the principal of collecting as a personal pursuit becomes intertwined with the need to seek justification of the collector's practice from others.

When discussing display, Collector D states: "it's a quick and easy way to make you feel like you have redecorated", which allows for collectors to constantly exhibit their multifaceted personality (i.e. film fan, art and print enthusiast) to others through the circulating display of multiple prints. This emphasises the importance of displaying character traits, where the ability to show multiple AMPs demonstrates the depth of the collector's interests. Several collectors also discussed the concept of 'rotational frames', and while they would not consider putting economically valuable artwork in these frames, they do allow collectors to change and swap prints regularly, displaying their commitment to the varied interests which form the basis of their character.

It appears that decorating the home with AMPs for the response of others is highly sought after by AMP collectors, even if these commentators have no affiliation to the field of collecting, or even a vested interest in film/art/printing. Collector B appreciates that they become a talking point adding: ''I love it when people come round and go 'Crickey'!", this acting as affirmation to his practice through the accumulation of cultural capital from the response of others. This is also akin to social capital, in that AMPs become a fixture for conversation to circulate around. Collector H confirms this while discussing a further interesting by-product of displaying his prints and the reaction they receive:

> When I have some stuff hanging around my house people come round and go 'what's that' and want to know about it and sometimes, to be honest, I can't be bothered explaining it to them. They go 'where can I buy one of those', you can't, 'how much is it worth', and I'm embarrassed to say how much I have paid
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Although he comments that he would be embarrassed to discuss price[9], the decision not to discuss this demonstrates both a critical awareness of his practice, but indirectly justifies his economic expenditure in the fact that his visitors are impressed and inquisitive of his collection (and its expense). Where it has been noted that cultural and social capital can be acquired through display, economic capital is also intrinsic to this aspect of practice and can be contextually used in exchange for said social and cultural capital. It is also worth noting that Collector H has an extremely good awareness of the aftermarket (he has spent a significant amount of resources in the field) and many of the items within the collection are worth exponentially more than what he initially paid. Therefore, though there is an element of critique assigned to his comments regarding expenditure, it is offset by a deeper understanding of capital's relevance to the field. Essentially, where social and cultural capital can be obtained from the comments of visitors, he chooses not to disclose economic cost as those external to the field, who have no awareness of the 'rules of the game', would not understand the intricacies of monetary values attached to AMPs. This therefore has the potential to negatively impact the habitus if the positive cultural/social capital obtained is offset against any negative judgement of practice based on significant economic capital bound to AMPs. Collector H even reiterates this idea of embarrassment:

[9] This has also being eluded to earlier in the chapter

> These things I have on the wall, when you tell people how much they are worth and they ask how much did you spend on this stuff, it can be quite embarrassing at times
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

This clash of capital represents a phenomenon within collecting practice, and while obtaining each form is deemed important to the collector, it is the beholder that determines which form of capital accumulation is most relevant within those interactions.

Many collectors openly discuss the reactions of their family (most often their spouse/partner and their children) to their collecting practice, in particular the AMPs they display. While each viewer grants the opportunity for capital accumulation, it is those closest to the collector that demonstrate the most power with their opinions on assigning capital, subsequently impacting and altering strategy. Collector I comments that he has displayed a print for the 2017 film *Wonder Woman* (dir. Patty Jenkins) in his daughters room, even though she is too young to see the film or appreciate its narrative. These insights demonstrate the importance he places on integrating his family into his practice, where their appreciation acts as a justification of his collection. This initially supports elements of the habitus as taste is similarly justified and this is then reinforced as he goes on to mention that: “everyone who visits [his] home comments positively on [his] posters”. He will even show them his archived collection if they display enough interest, as if to open up his identity/personality to those he can both trust and whose opinion brings potential cultural/social capital.

Similarly, Collector C states: “I want my kids to enjoy them as well”, as this gives him personal gratification but also allows for further capital exchange within the family dynamic as AMPs initiate conversation with his children regarding his own nostalgic

memories and parallel cultural capital attached to his knowledge and experience of cinema. Their affirmation, while perhaps not consistent with tradition notions of cultural capital acquisition, still resonates with the collector in the same way as if a fellow AMP collector admired his prints. It is in these forms of capital that the collector adds subjective parameters based on their own strategy and practice within the field. Given this notion, many collectors seemingly shift the field of play from one which is community centric to one which exists within the domestic space, where the two overlap. Whereas certain AMPs are revered by the community they would not be deemed 'Wall Safe' by a number of collectors due to their graphic content. Again, it is the collector who controls the assignment of these values to the display of AMPs, adapting the 'rules of the game' depending on where exactly the 'game' is to be played. As a result, cultural capital can be acquired from the community in relation to owning these AMPs, but this would be diminished by those who are the immediate audience of the poster when displayed in the home. Inevitably this becomes part of an implicit equation for the collector to regulate capital gain against strategy.

Sharing Online

The display of art within the home is rarely physically witnessed by members of the community due to their geographic dispersion, yet there is an opportune possibility in sharing photographs of one's collection digitally via social media. This becomes part of the same 'Shadow Cultural Economy' (Fiske 2008) mentioned earlier, where the manner in which a piece is displayed/framed can be integral in obtaining subcultural capital, affirmed in the comments of other collectors when presented with images of said framing (Hills 2010). The use of mounts (mattes), the colour of both mounts and

frame, the materials used in the frame including the glass[10], and the use of reversable, acid free materials, all add to the calculations made by the collector and the field as to what value is assigned by others as part of the supplementary framing process. The cost of framing is also of note, with price often vastly exceeding the cost of the print itself, further acknowledging the interplay between capital which, when combined, can increase the potential cultural capital achieved. This is relatable to Fiske's (2008) and later Hills' (2010) comments that individuals within a collective group 'enunciate productivity', how an individual demonstrates fandom through engagement with the relevant text/practice that would be 'readable' by those who are also initiated in said practice. For example, Collector H notes that:

> It's a journey, getting the print, printing it, getting it framed, then it's taking it home and finding somewhere to put it, then having people over and talking about it and that is what people love. People love to show off on the groups what they have and how they have framed it, you often see collectors doing tours of their house

(Personal Interview 2018)

Sharing within the domestic space to acquire social capital runs parallel to the acquisition of cultural capital from sharing displayed AMPs digitally within the community. Where some collectors may not choose to openly display their collections and instead suppose potential cultural capital, others will share pictures and even video tours of their collection online with the intent to demonstrate and obtain subcultural capital.

Care and consideration of the framing process can signify ''belonging'' to the AMP field, where engagement in this process determines belonging through

[10] With museum grade archival anti-UV glass being the paramount choice

demonstrating and understanding the accepted 'rules of the game', while commentators simultaneously verify the collectors framing decisions. The greater affirmative response the more capital and the stronger the justification of their actions/practice is. Collector F goes beyond this in noting the personal fulfilment they inwardly receive from being part of the framing process. Whereas most collectors note the importance of framing in the hobby, and particularly pay reverence to the use of archival methods (a point which will be addressed shortly), Collector F states:

> I love going to see my framer, the best is when you go to pick them up and you see them […] when you pick them up and he shows me I get butterflies in my stomach, I get really excited and I can't wait to get home and hang them
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

This visceral gratification is difficult to contextualise, but demonstrates the importance some collectors assign to framing, not just for the response of the community should they choose to share images, but from their own personal gratification. Through exercising such consideration to framing and in knowingly adhering to set methodological approaches to framing as dictated by the field, the collector demonstrates respect for the AMP. This not only protects habitus and identity, but embellishes it.

Protecting the AMP

This notion of capital acquisition as part of collecting practice transcends into storage and archival, where AMPs are effectively "markers of personal identity" (Geraghty 2014: 38) with their protection being integral in shaping, controlling and caring for the key building blocks of the collector's character. To treat AMPs in such a way is akin to treating the print (and therefore its subject matter) as valuable as, culturally speaking,

fine art. Here the collector's actions seek to bridge the gap between potentially lowbrow film interests and highbrow artwork, supporting subcultural capital through the assignment of more acceptable cultural capital.

The interviewees often discussed what they literally do with the AMPs that they have collected. Outside of reselling/trading, there are several options collectors can choose. Given the nature of AMPs as a part of visual material culture, and in line with the previous discussion, displaying the artwork seems to be the most obvious option, however this is seldom the case. The cost of framing artwork and the sheer quantities in which some people collect AMPs, mean that it is not always practical. However, the inability to frame and display artwork is not always seen negatively by the collector and instead as another aspect of practice in the field, with Collector C knowingly stating that he has AMPs he will never frame, "even though they are prints I love". Therefore, a reliable method of storage and archival is adopted by most collectors which not only protects their collection but allows them to peruse it at their leisure, an activity many collectors discuss fondly, Collector L stating that: "you can still appreciate your print from your flat file" and Collector C noting that they spend time every week going through their flat file and spending time "pouring over the details" of his AMPs. All of the collectors interviewed discussed how they stored their prints and the level of care they took in assuring that they are safely maintained.

This concept of assigning value and importance to archival is seen across all collecting activity (Belk et al 1988; Danet and Katriel 1989) with these concepts likened to a ritual or spiritualistic experience (Danet and Katriel 1989; Plotz 1999). In the first instance, such consideration may be needed in order to retain speculative economic capital, as Collector B states: "if I'm prepared to spend that amount of money on them [AMPs], and there have been a couple where it has been quite a significant outlay,

spending a tenner to protect it makes absolute sense". However, there is a further motivation in protecting and controlling one's own identity through caring for the collection. If the collection itself represents identity then protecting it appropriately is simply 'logical' to the collector, in the same vein as the attention given to framing and displaying artwork within the home.

Storage and Archival

AMP collectors take the storage of prints seriously and often find that they are in need of significant domestic space for print storage. They will usually adopt one of the following practices, each with its own limitations, but also reflective of the importance of the protection of the collection to the individual parallel to its capital value. This is economic in the literal cost of the prints and subsequent storage, but also cultural in understanding that the AMP has value beyond money and ensuring that they are protected is to retain and maintain this capital. Some collectors, mainly those who are new to the field, sometimes kept their prints in the tubes that they were delivered in, though this is judged negatively by the community for several reasons reflecting a need to understand the 'rules of the game'. Firstly, that the paper itself has an inherent 'memory', where the fibres retain the shape that they become accustomed to. This means that if a print is rolled for too long it becomes difficult to flatten and that impacts the ability to frame and display the AMP. This can even have a negative effect on aftermarket value, where collectors would be reticent in buying a print which has been left in this state for a prolonged period, thus disrupting economic capital. Further still, as it can be seen as 'bad practice' to leave prints in their tubes the collections cultural capital comes into question. Also, most poster tubes in which artwork is packaged for delivery, are not made from acid free materials which, when a print is

exposed to for a significant length of time, can lead to damage and discolouration. Finally, this method of storage is likely to eventually lead to foxing[11], and with the prints difficult to access this could be an issue which takes a significant amount of time for the collector to become aware of.

Other options include largescale portfolios and, what most collectors would consider to be the best method of storage, archival/architects/plan chests/flat files[12]. This is physically a substantial piece of furniture (the nature of most AMPs being 24'' x 36'' necessitates the footprint of the furniture exceeding this) which occupies a large space in the home, with some interviewees noting the impact of such storage methods. One interviewee commented that they own two plan chests and subsequently mused that to own a "big chunk of wood that doesn't really fit anywhere" signified being truly embedded in the practice of AMP collecting (Collector B 2018). The notion of a collection becoming somewhat permanently integrated into the home demonstrates an extension of the collector themselves. There is also an acknowledgement from Collector D that at some point in his practice he reached a tipping point, where it made practical sense to obtain a flat file in order to sufficiently protect the potential economic and cultural capital bound to his collection. Their 'value' provided the logic to take such action and again emphasises that capital aids rationalisation for AMP collectors.

Many collectors who have spent significant time in the field will also store their prints individually within acid-free sleeves before placing them in a portfolio or flat file, with Collector B going so far as to also place them all on acid free backing board to ensure they do not bend or crease. Similarly, when prints do get framed it is customary for those prints which are considered valuable, to be framed behind museum glass

[11] Reddish brown spots appearing on the paper. This tends to be a result of aging and therefore affects older paper artefacts, but can potentially occur sooner as a result of mould and moisture.
[12] with these terms for this item of furniture being interchangeable in the field

(UV protection), mounted/matted as to both exemplify/compliment the artwork, but to also make sure that said artwork is not touching the glass as this can lead to damage[13]. Finally, all framing materials will be acid free and the back of the frame would be sealed. To go to such lengths in storage, protection and display can have significant financial impact on a collector, therefore the value (economic, cultural and/or social) that a collector must attach to their collection as to protect it so substantially must vastly offset the cost to archive.

AMPs are delicate, a point directly noted by Collector B: ‘’it is ultimately my choice to spend a significant amount of my disposable income on something that is inherently fragile’’, meaning they are susceptible to a variety of outside influences which could harm their structure and appearance. While there is therefore a practical need to be aware of sufficient storage and archival techniques, it is of interest that the collector has actively chosen to take custody over something that needs careful attention. The depth of protective measures exhibited by some collectors, along with the associated financial commitment, shares similarities with conservationist methods adopted by curators and museums, with the assumption that the collector is again assigning cultural capital to their collection through emphasising the importance of preservation. Again, this could be seen to bridge the gap between high and lowbrow pursuits for the individual, where they see AMPs as important works of art, an example of skilled craft production, and as such it should be treated accordingly. Protecting the AMP is to protect its subject matter while escalating its overall cultural value. Collector I exemplifies this in his statement that he is “very careful of my prints, I treat them like thy are worth thousands and thousands of pounds, even though some of them are

[13] Temperature changes can cause condensation leading to prints being more likely to absorb moisture if they are touching the glass.

not". These behaviours add to the notion that AMPs are as valuable to the collector as more culturally revered examples of fine art within wider society. This is to appease the collector who wishes to emphasise the potential cultural capital value associated with AMPs, even though this would be questionable to individuals outside of the field. The collector wants their collection to have value and to treat it in such a way subjectively assigns said capital value in their eyes.

Several interviewees noted that they even have their collection insured separately from their home and contents insurance, or as specific named items on their policy, with Collector B stating that he has the collection insured for "five figures" and Collector D elusively suggesting it was "well insured". From their physical care to their financial protection via insurance, collectors agree openly that they collection is valuable to them, yet how they choose to address this value is difficult to determine. On one hand there is a significant financial commitment, which would be covered by an insurance claim should a print be damaged/destroyed. This is also relative to the somewhat extreme levels some collectors will go to in order to protect their investment in their collection as discussed above. However, this also protects the cultural and social capital bound to the AMPs with Collector D stating that he even gets "concerned with some of the high value ones, sometimes I wish that they weren't worth so much". This sentiment somewhat contradicts the motivations of many collectors for speculative economic gain. Here personal gratification (and potential cultural capital) outweighs economic capital, in that the dissonance between care and potential financial loss is offset in the subjective value attached to the AMP by the collector. This demonstrates how the practice is rationalised internally by the collector, and continually justified against capital values. This separate personal value can be parallel to the meaning (subjectively and objectively) embodied in the print for the

collector, and also more practical elements which are not reflective of currency per se, such as the time committed to acquire an AMP, and any personal narrative surrounding its acquisition.

With many collectors choosing to archive a significant amount of their collections, a question is raised as to how any potential capital value is realised and released. Speculative economic capital cannot be literally acquired unless the AMP is sold. Cultural/subcultural capital can be acquired through a collector discussing their collection with others (collectors or non-collectors) but this cannot be fully utilised while the AMPs remain in storage. As Hills points out, “In Thornton’s definition of subcultural capital, it is implicitly and logically stipulated that for any object or embodiment to function as this type of capital, it must be apparent to other fans, since status is conferred ‘’on the owner in the eyes of the beholder’’’ (91: 2010). Archived AMPs can never be seen to truly meet their potential in relation to this notion, but could still serve a purpose for the individual collector, where they can suppose capital values, ruminate on them but inevitably never ‘release’ them.

It could be suggested that this practice must therefore generate satisfaction to the collector similar to, but not the same as, Hills (2010) follow up comments that individuals can obtain ‘imagined subcultural capital’. Hills notes that this form of capital can be obtained through such actions as reading about an event online relating authentic capital or non-imagined subcultural capital to liveness, differentiated by fans attending subculturally reverent events, or simply ‘consuming’ them from distance. Attendance is authenticity to Hills and an opportunity to express, obtain and distribute capital. However, in collecting AMPs (and arguably the majority of collecting practice), there are definitive elements of practice which are purely individual pursuits, where liveness is non-existent in Hills’ sense, but is reappropriated against the tangibility of

the AMP itself as a marker of authenticity. Therefore, the actions are still relatable to imagined subcultural capital but are simultaneously deemed authentic in the eyes of the collector and others, as ‘liveness’ still subjectively exists as a by-product of the physical existence of the collection. This only remains imagined when considered in parallel with a traditional understanding of capital, yet the gratification collectors obtain from ownership, storage and subsequent speculation on potential capital values is very much real. This gives rise to the need to introduce and consider capital acquisition, where imagined capital has the same positive impact on the collector making it significant to the field and practice. This may exist as a strand of cultural capital which might be termed ‘Personal Capital’, a subject that will be reintroduced once further elements potentially influencing it have been outlined.

Printing and Tangibility

Authenticity in Printing

As discussed across the previous chapter many interviewees noted the importance of the AMP printing process, where screenprinting as a craft practice is unanimously valued by the collector. Collectors explicitly stated that they would refuse to add an AMP to their collection if it did not meet this requirement, regardless of artwork, artist, property, or any other production values. It is in these production values that collectors attribute ‘authenticity’ to AMPs, with evolving layers of what is considered ‘an authentic AMP’, moving well beyond it simply existing. Where all production values contribute to authenticity, it is apparent that the printing process predominantly impacts the collector’s practice. Production based authenticity when embedded in the AMP represents all capital acquisition, with craft being associable to economic capital, simultaneously attributing to cultural value both inside and outside of the field. As a

result, collectors choose screenprints as opposed to other methods as they represent the greatest potential capital gain.

The legitimacy embodied in printing practice is noted by Collector C: ‘’there’s just a bit of authenticity about the Screenprint. The process is so cool, and sort of bamboozles me’’. Authenticity through printing has become bound to AMP collecting practice, meaning it is an expectation of the collector for AMPs to be screenprinted, where craftmanship is utilised to demarcate hierarchy, in turn generating value. As an integral part of the field, screenprinting an AMP is equivalent to embedding cultural and subcultural capital within the print, and as a collector gains knowledge of the process their practice evolves to focus on collecting screenprints above any alternatives. Interviewees note that upon entering the field there was an inherent motivation to further understand the craft of screenprinting, potentially pursuing further cultural capital through obtaining some form of knowledge based ‘insider status’ (Hills 2010) allowing them not only to have grounds for appreciation of the practice, but the comprehension to argue their desire toward collecting screenprints. This is reflected in acquiring and demonstrating cultural capital through understanding the craft, but also aids the individual in claiming economic capital value due to the labour intensiveness of screenprinting, the cost of production materials, and its economic lucrativeness as an artisanal product.

Several interviewees comment that they have access to large scale printing facilities (inkjet) and therefore could reprint their own ‘versions’ of AMPs based on digital images released online. Yet they would never choose to do this as these prints would be inauthentic, or as Collector A suggests “not the real thing”[14]. It is by virtue of

[14] They would also be illegal reproductions in many cases, though collectors do not mention this. This further enforces the significance of the physicality of the authentic AMP, where the legal aspect of a reproduction should perhaps be highly considered by the collector, it is not as it is almost not worth their interest at that point.

the screenprinting process that the print gains its value in the eyes of the collector, and not in either its representation as an artwork or even as a physical object (any other print format). Where the latter would still allow the collector to commit to many other elements of practice; collecting, framing, archival etc, the collector would still disapprove if the printing process that has become integral to the field was lacking. It is therefore not about the tangibility per se, but printing to emphasise tangibility. To use Baudrillard's (1994) terminology, the print becomes 'hyperreal' or, one could argue, hypertangible.

This extenuated physicality is recognised by the collector, with Collector L mentioning that physicality feels ever more important in the digital world. As a comic book collector and reader, he would never choose to read digital comics as they lack the authenticity that they embody in the physical space. "They look too crisp, too fake", and by virtue of this lack of legitimacy they similarly lack value to the collector. Collector C directly states that there is less value in other printing formats, believing that they are just "not real". On the subject of digital printing he says that: "I am sure there is work out there that is done really well but it wouldn't hold anything for me it if wasn't an original screenprint", again identifying that any value to be found in the AMP would be non-existent if not printed in line with the expectation of the field. Collector B further adds that it is in the very tangibility of the screenprint that gives the AMP any kind of impact, it gives it meaning compared to other forms of printing, and it is this meaning (even if it is a subjective meaning assigned by the collector) that allows the AMP to fully exude its potential capital. Interestingly Collector A also states: "I won't pay for something that I can't hold because I am a collector and I do resell stuff", meaning that this physicality not only impacts cultural and subcultural capital but also the concept of economic capital through resale. This value is intrinsic to the tangibility of the print,

as without a physical presence it potentially ceases to hold any capital value to the collector.

Physicality Embodies and Enhances Capital

In a practical sense then, and given the interest collectors show in economic capital, a print needs to physically exist for collectors to see the value in assigning economic capital to it, i.e. they want to feel that they have literally acquired something for their money. Collector C notes that ultimately the resale value of his AMPs is important and finds his practice easier to justify as he believes that the print quality will always retain value, commenting: “it is an easy way for me to spend money on stuff that I enjoy and know it’s not being frittered away”. Collector H agrees that screenprinting itself inherently adds value, and good screenprinting demands further value as this is in itself recognised by the community. Economic capital bound to the AMP is based on printing/craftsmanship, alongside the cultural value of owning what is generally deemed to be a ‘high’ quality print. This is better understood against tehir dislike towards other print formats. Given that the craft process accentuates the visual and physical impact that screenprints inherently have, this would not be replicable through other printing practices, at least not in the way desired by the collector. Inevitably the motivation to collect screenprints above others is, in part, the collector using the craft method to justify economic capital expenditure, and a practice through which they acquire and demonstrate cultural, subcultural and social capital in understanding the production method and being able to rationalise this against collecting.

As discussed throughout, habitus is, in part, the result of capital acquisition, the irrational supported by the rational. Within AMP collecting capital is used to support

the collector's personality traits as a film and art enthusiast. Across collecting there is a continual construct that the majority of collectors feel driven to obtain something which physically embodies these attributes to assert ownership and control over (Klinger 2006), and in this case AMPs provide a physical totem. Inevitably, the goal of collectors is to attain some form of recognition for their collection, where the ultimate goal may be to have a collection displayed in a museum (Danet and Katriel 1989), yet it could be equally sufficient to display in the collectors' domestic space for the equivalent recognition of friends, family and peers. This is relevant when considering identity, where this space is paramount in constructing these ideologies for the collector, and where the physicality of the object determines its ability to represent elements of identity, cyclically reaffirming these characteristics to both the collector and any audience viewing the collection.

Here, tangibility becomes further relevant as, to put it simply, it is difficult to knowingly display the intangible and more so to exhort the feeling of control over such a thing. Given the importance of the AMP to the collector in generating and affirming identity, the concept of hypertangibility becomes pertinent as it is not enough to represent these elements through any other print format as this shows a lack of importance, care and consideration to the art and subject matter. Collector E supports this: "I do recognise separations and ink, and someone physically doing that screenprint does make it a bit more rewarding to me". A gratification is obtained from the collector's perspective through seeing, witnessing, understanding and being able to physically engage with the printing process. The simplicity of it being a 'real' artefact impacts the value the collector will assign to such things with Collector E moving on to say: "I am a big fan of tangible items, and I am also a fan of investing in something I love". This comment of 'investing', one could assume referencing economic outlay and

potential speculative value assigned to the print, is offset somewhat by the statement that it is an investment in something which is loved. While not to say economic and cultural capital cannot fulfil this criterion, the comment would suggest a further personal connection to the AMP in the collection, which is intrinsic to its physical existence.

Ethereality Versus Hypertangibility

When asked if collectors would consider collecting a purely digital version of the artwork, one with no physical presence, it was unanimously rejected, with Collector J adding that "I would never have a digital image, that would not mean anything to be at all […] you've got to hold the thing in your hand otherwise I don't feel that you have it". Physicality is the key to instilling the notion of value and to the exertion of control over the collection. If tangibility is necessary to capital being fully realised and embodied in the item, then it is necessary for the AMP to provide this as it becomes its overall purpose as an asset to be added to the collection.

It could be argued that this desire for physicality is relative to the fact that film itself cannot be held, therefore those who identify as film fans have few options available should they wish to physically engage with elements of film as part of identity. Whereas VHS and DVD have previously been a mechanism for this interactivity (Bjarkman 2004; Klinger 2006), home cinema is moving closer to being purely digital and physical film posters themselves are becoming less commonplace, with several examples addressed in previous chapters only existing online. AMPs offer a definitive counterpoint to the rise of digital technology infiltrating cinema, giving fans and collectors a point of contact with film. Where cultural capital can be obtained through the consumption of film and subsequent discussion with others (Hills 2010), there is

still a drive to physically obtain and demonstrate elements of this capital, inherent in the stability and permanence of tangible ephemera. Hills discusses the concept that fan's engagement relies on some form of embodiment of the text, either through changing elements of appearance to give an outside signal of fandom or through the consumption and dissemination of knowledge. While the later can be demonstrated through explicit and implicit social interaction, the former relies on tangibility to truly manifest engagement. Here the AMP offers a tactile response to the desire of the fan to engage with the text for the purposes of demonstrating their embodied subcultural capital.

Screenprinting elevates the physical rendering of the subject matter, allowing the collector another level of engagement. Desirability is based on the care given to the representation of those things that the individual finds personally important. The very focus on enhanced physicality of the AMP gives rise to its potential for it to be considered overengineered or even 'hypertangible'. This is acknowledged by Collector F in his retelling of the first time he saw a screenprint in person: "I got it and when I saw it, the depth in it, the layers and the different inks, I was just blown away and that just set me off really"

Many collectors (and producers) note the nuances of screenprinting, from the richness and vibrancy of the colour, to the notable texture, to even the pungent smell of the ink, all being integral to how the screenprint is engaged with and how it demonstrates further value to the collector in its tactility, elements missing from alternative production methods. For example, Collector D notes that: ''with screenprints, what I like about them it's the bits, the metallics, the layers, the varnish", and Collector C simply comments: "I like screenprints because I like how they feel". Similarly, Jack Durieux, artist and co-owner of Nautilus Art Prints notes that "the smell,

the actual layers of ink, the colours that you cannot replicate using CMYK printing", all make the screenprint desirable, noting the dissonance between a digital image on screen and a real, hypertangible screenprint. This is also a point made by James Park, owner of Black Dragon Press, who comments that it is difficult to convey the feeling of a screenprint online, it has to be witnessed in reality to fully understand and appreciate. He also notes that "screenprints are like vinyl and Giclee is like CDs", again emphasising the physicality of the screenprint not only as an object but comparably to against its counterparts. In essence the printing process enables the collector to achieve their goals through their practice. They wish to demonstrate identity and emphasise this through capital acquisition, where the screenprint denotes further capital potential than any other form or format of printing that could be used. This in turn generates a self-servicing satisfaction, a point which can transition across all practice and becomes a significant appeal of AMP collecting in its own right.

Personal Capital

Hills (2010) terms subcultural capital which is not outwardly demonstrated/exchanged by fans, meaning their capital is not witnessed by 'the beholder', as 'potential fixed capital'. This capital is considered no less authentic than that which is outwardly exchanged through social interactions, implying that the individual retains fixed capital with the intention to release their capital at the opportune time for it to meet its potential. It is not valueless while retained but its value is not realised. However, through interviews it has become apparent that while the majority of AMP collectors are guilty of holding 'potential fixed capital' in the AMPs they have archived or secretively displayed (not sharing images within the community), they still achieve significant fulfilment from maintaining a personal and private collection. While being

witnessed by the appropriate beholder can lead to satisfaction in capital exchange, retaining capital as potential fixed capital may be considered similarly satisfying to the collector, where this potential fixed capital is still being 'spent', but through the interactions between the collector and their collection. Hills also suggests that the individual can acquire imagined cultural capital through consuming knowledge outside of taking part in social activity, as a distant observer. This is relative to the AMP collector, where they keep their practice relatively private but review online discussion via social media and forum interactions to maintain an understanding of what the community determines is the cultural, subcultural, and economic value of AMPs and ergo their collection. However, it is difficult to consider this 'imagined capital' if the AMP under scrutiny by the community is the physical property of the collector. For example, the sales values of AMPs are tracked on the expressobeans.com forum site (it is also possible to access sales information from social media groups and eBay listings) where a collector can keep track of their investment in a particular print. Up to the point of resale there is an argument to suggest that this is still imagined economic capital, yet this would make it no different to that of any currency which in itself relies on potential value until exchanged for goods and services.

If the collector recognises these potential values and finds gratification in their supposition regardless of any real form of exchange, then this serves the same purpose for the individual as other forms of capital acquisition/exchange. Any potential capital embodied within an AMP can have a separate yet intertwined value to the collector which is subjectively implemented to achieve a sense of personal satisfaction. This could go further into explaining why collecting as a practice is rewarding to the individual regardless of what happens to the collection outside of the collector's own interactions with it. Many collectors discussed the concept that they

would never consider selling their collection irrespective of price or the AMPs' desirability within the field. While this could be considered to be retaining and speculating on economic and cultural capital, these same collectors often cited a 'personal attachment' being the blockade stopping exchange. It is a deep connection binding the collector to their collection, it is part of them and represents them, more so than what literal economic value it may have or what cultural position it has adopted which, while desirable are used by the collector to legitimise this connection they feel.

Collector L highlights this in that some of his most 'valuable' prints are ones he has had signed by the actor/s of the film properties represented. He mentions cult actor Bruce Campbell in particular as a 'hero', and his signed AMPs for *Evil Dead II* (dir. Sam Raimi 1987) and *Army of Darkness* (dir. Sam Raimi 1992), while not monetarily valuable, are his most treasured. They not only have the reminiscent quality of embodying his relationship with the film, but now have further memories through the experiences he has attached to them in meeting Campbell. They mean something to him beyond economic capital, social, cultural and even subcultural capital. While the prints have value in all of these categories, it is his personal value that is paramount when discussing the importance of these prints. These relationships between collector and collection are the catalyst towards further acknowledging the notion of a form of 'personal capital'.

Personal Capital as Assurance of the Self

The subjective nature of collectors and their practice allows them to choose, reassign and appropriate meaning to objects (Pearce 1994; 1995), and this meaning can be built around existing notions of capital while simultaneously retaining

independence from capital as is understood in Bourdieu's terms. Several interviewees illuminate this further, with Collector B stating that:

> Movie prints, rather than art prints, movie prints relate to a film you've seen, films that you have seen relate to a particular part of your life. Therefore, you have the sensations or the secondary sensations which that particular image trigger, which could be physical or it could be mental
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Here, the collector eludes to the personal reward he receives from collecting AMPs, akin to cultural capital bound to the prints (they represent film) but moving into something much deeper, personal, and ultimately subjective. Collector C highlights a similar point but in relation to economic capital when he states: "I don't place my personal value on their monetary value". Whereas most collectors are assured of the economic capital associated with their prints, there is an adjacent comfort which comes from ownership itself. While all other capital is still important to the individual, this extraneous element, personal capital as it were, seems inherently integral within the practice of collecting. Where all interviewees identify as collectors, and their habitus is in part built around this identity, they also consider art and film as important in defining who they are and why they collect. While earlier in the chapter it was suggested that the habitus is built around capital acquisition, and economic, cultural and social capital are all acknowledged as important to the collectors' practice, further emphasis is given to the profound personal connection that an AMP collection represents to its owner. It becomes the physical manifestation of their identity and one which can be controlled, cared for and displayed. While traditional capital acquisition may justify AMP collecting in the eyes of others, it is in this generation of personal capital, which truly legitimises their actions to themselves.

Stewart (1984) notes that the items within a collection take the form of souvenirs, a point relevant to the motivations of collecting AMPs. While AMPs are a modern phenomenon, constantly in production, the texts (films) they represent span across the past century often making them vehicles for nostalgia in the same way a souvenir can trigger memories. AMPs further facilitate this by offering a fixed physical artefact for the collector to attach personal value to. Tangibility is ever more important for those who build elements of their habitus on their connection to film, an ever increasing ethereal medium, difficult to control by the individual outside of physical means afforded through the inherent qualities linked to the AMP. In connection to this Collector C reminisces of taking his family to the Video Shop every Friday to rent a film to watch in their home cinema. This is a fond memory of the relationship he and his family had with film, but as Video Shops closed and as fewer physical film formats come to exist, this relationship has shifted. He discusses how the home cinema became defunct (replacing this space in his home with a gym) and a fundamental aspect of the importance of film to his family dynamic also disappeared. He comments:

> For me it has changed the relationship about how I feel about the connection you have with a movie in your hand, that I personally lived through as a kid
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

AMPs now offer that connection and it is this that he seeks to share with his family. AMPs provide a tangible connection to film, remind him of that experience and allow him to grasp and control something he feels is fundamental to himself and his connection to his family. He even suggests that the main reason for his collecting practice is that AMPs: “remind me of my childhood, I guess I want a little bit of that back”.

As mentioned, the influence of nostalgia on an individual as a coping mechanism for times of uncertainty shares a thematic element with Martin's (1999) opinion that collecting as an act provides further societal security. While this security could also be linked back to economic capital, as speculative values of collections increase, the concept of a collection acting as a series of nostalgic objects which one can systematically control adds a further dynamic as to the importance of collecting to regulate one's wellbeing. It is the physicality of the AMP that makes this possible for the collector, where production values allow for a literal connection to be made with the print while embodying an element of nostalgia in both the film being represented and illustrative style. On this note, the concept that film posters have been previously noted by both Pearce (1994), and Poole and Poole (1997) as a trigger for inducing memories and nostalgia for a viewer, reinforces the act of collecting AMPs and the need/ability to regulate this part of the collectors identity which is naturally bound to intangible interests and memories.

This is evidenced in Collector E's comments that: "We all collect movie posters, or I am suggesting we do, because it takes you back to the time you'd go watch a film at the cinema". He also comments that the prints and artwork remind him of his childhood, reinforcing the recall effect of AMPs, definitively suggesting that they offer a form of gratification in their nostalgic quality. Even those AMPs representing new films are produced under the principles of an illustrative style which harkens back to a historical point in cinema seen as personally evocative for many of the collectors interviewed. The tangibility of the print offers a real point of connection, allowing the collector to attach memories to a fixed marker, with Collector E saying that every print he cares about has "an emotional attachment" which represents his relationship with film. The AMP becomes a vessel for demonstrating the importance of cinema to his

own history, allowing him to exert control over experiences and personality traits he considers significant.

Ownership of an AMP can fundamentally impact the collector, acting initially as a memory trigger but seemingly engaging the individual in a deeper manner than simple reminisce into becoming an exemplar of the collectors' own history and identity to those around him/her and, perhaps more importantly, to themselves. Collector B speaks fondly of how AMPs can provide a visceral experience for the collector:

> I haven't got that many Star Wars prints because I am not a huge fan but whenever I see one I remember going to the cinema in 1977, the cinema being so busy that they had all the kids sitting 2 to a seat and sharing my popcorn with someone I have never seen before or would probably ever see again, or even if I did wouldn't recognise because it was dark and we were both watching a screen, and it's quite resonant, so Star Wars prints remind me of shared popcorn
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

This notion of collecting relative to personal histories is not uncommon and is shared across popular culture collecting as a whole (Geraghty 2014). Therefore, it represents a significant form of value to the collector in relation as to why they commit to, and continue to, practice. This remains internal, parallel to self-satisfaction and personal wellbeing through being able to control these desirable elements of one's own self, where the collector will reflect on their own collection for nostalgic reasons relative to understanding one's own identity (Benjamin 1969; Pearce 1994). While this has been discussed across this thesis it is further cemented by Collector F:

> My kids they see all my posters and they're sort of influenced by them and they know the sort of films I like and then they ask 'dad can we watch this film or that film'. When I was growing up I remember films, I remember films my dad watched, I remember films that my older brother watched and they are strong childhood memories
>
> (Personal Interview 2018)

Film is important to the collector, as are the fields of art and printing, and while it may seem to the outside observer that connectivity could be achieved with any physical artefact related to the subject matter (e.g. a standard poster), for the AMP collector this would simply not 'do justice' to the integral importance film plays within their life. To see, own and collect AMPs is to gratify the collector in a manner they deem befitting of their vested interest in the field of cinema, and this is understood and rationalised through the explicit and implicit connection of capital to the AMP by the individual to the point that it moves beyond traditional notions of capital and into the realm of personal gratification as an inherent value bound to the AMP.

In Summary

Collectors utilise the both the production values attached to AMPs and their collecting practice to implicitly and explicitly acquire and distribute capital, where existing concepts of capital provide a framework for analysis of a relatively intricate practice. This capital is used by the collector to rationalise and ultimately legitimise their practice, while simultaneously assigning value to the collectors' interests across the wider cultural sphere. This results in an ability to both celebrate habitus and the identity of the collector through practice, while controlling and maintaining its characteristics.

Capital infiltrates all aspects of AMP collecting, initiated in the production process but ultimately determined and utilised within the collecting community itself. Economic capital is intrinsic to justifying collecting for speculative reasons, increasing aftermarket values of AMPs demarcating the success of one's practice should they be part of their collections. This also becomes a base point of reference in legitimising AMPs themselves, where the wider social sphere directly recognises the value of currency and its meaning.

When it comes to the relationship between the collector, their AMPs and others, displaying within the home demonstrates cultural, subcultural and social capital, or at least the opportunity to obtain them. Comments from those within and external to the community are valuable to the collector in affirming their practice, while similarly allowing the collector to demonstrate identity within the domestic setting. The importance of the relationship between the AMP and the collector's identity leads to the compulsion to protect and archive their collection as if to protect elements of oneself. This treats the AMP with a level of respect akin to the treatment of fine art, further increasing the potential for cultural/subcultural capital, while simultaneously protecting any financial investment.

The inherent nature of the AMP to be 'overengineered', leads to it being potentially considered 'hypertangible', the increased dependency on production used to again instil and embed capital into the AMP, which is utilised by the collector when legitimising collecting activity. It generates a physical point of contact with their interest in film, but more than that it champions the subject matter in a manner befitting of the collector's connection to said interests. This is implicitly balanced against capital, where the cultural capital generated through screenprinting is appropriated against respect for the film represented. As alternative printing methods fail to represent this

value to the collector, as these values can only be attributed to the physicality of the AMP, the very nature of tangibility and its relationship to tradition notions of capital comes into question, particularly when offset against the increase in digital technology.

While obtaining capital is then important to the collector, it may not come to be distributed by them. Here, practice continues to flourish, with interviewees demonstrating the same degree of interest, commitment and passion to their activity in line with capital acquisition (the desire for capital motivates collecting), but without the need to utilise this capital in a manner anticipated by Bourdieu. This raises the issue of potential fixed capital (Hills 2010) being utilised by the collector within their own individual practice, similarly justifying collecting practice against supposed capital values and finding gratification in this, resulting in the notion of 'personal capital' being just as valuable as any other form to the collector. Ultimately the AMP, its production, its collection and its display could all be the result of multiple value structures, but capital offers a firm basis for interpretation element of why the collector chooses to collect.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

This thesis aimed to deconstruct how values are embedded in the AMP and, perhaps more importantly, how the collector assigns and utilises such values to navigate their practice. A combined initial focus on both popular culture (film) collecting and poster collecting provides the basis for future interest in such subjects adjacent to the contemporary setting of a modern, digital society. Where collecting studies has been reviewed in academia in relation to a myriad of topics, this area of study appears to have been underdeveloped in recent years. This is particularly true when considering fandom alongside collecting, where only a few short pieces have focused on specific elements of the topic such as mediating identity alongside class systems (Geraghty 2018), and the relationship between adults and toy collecting (Heljakka 2017; 2019). These examples offer insight into themes associated with the 'fan collector', but leave an opportunity to develop the subject further to understand the nuances of such collecting practices. Other recent studies have often used collecting in brief to facilitate other discussions as to how fans engage with their subject (Cinque, T. Redmond, S. 2019; Hunting 2019; Obiegbu, C. J. Larsen, G. Ellis, N. O'Reilly, D. 2019), leaving the core concept of collecting practice in the modern age in need of further development.

Across the thesis, the use of interview content illuminates an area yet to be explored, namely AMP collecting. Contributors were posed questions relative to my initial understanding of practice, but in conjunction with fundamental topics integral to the three contributing fields which act as the founding elements of AMP production (collecting, film and art/craft). Collectors discussed their practice openly, leading to a wealth of content offering insight into an often personal and private pursuit. Many of the findings parallel fundamental expectations, e.g. collecting as part of identity. Yet other responses which were often shared across the sample, conflicted previous

investigation, such as the relationship between the collector's actions and their family and the extent to which collecting fulfilled internal personal desires. It is in these results that the successfulness of the interview method is to be highlighted and, whilst there will always be issues with such research practice, it provided the unique opportunity to add depth to a discussion which circulates the intimacies of collecting.

It has been necessary to offer a deconstruction of the AMP and the field in which it is situated, where the initial chapters focused on laying the foundation for such concepts to then be critiqued/reapplied. As the thesis focuses dominantly on collecting, the current perspectives surrounding this subject provided the basis of the discussion to follow. An overview of how and why the individual would interact with popular culture objects gives rise to the 'fan collector' who demonstrates and navigates notions of identity through collecting. The cultural, political, and societal position the poster itself adopts offers a background as to why the poster as a medium can be considered valuable to the individual. Its history becoming the basis as to why a poster can be seen as a viable method through which one can display their interests in the domestic space, while leaning on perceptions of esteem as posters have become cultural artefacts, often displayed in museums and exhibitions. The film poster demonstrates these same values across its history, posing a further point of engagement for the fan collector who feels a kinship to the subject matter they are constructed around. This also establishes the basis as to the current environment in which AMPs have come to exist explaining, in part, their success across a nuanced collector community.

The later chapters have sought to demonstrate the way in which AMPs are produced to celebrate such values, while embedding a further set of elements

desirable to the collector, which facilitate and encourage practice. Where the collector can recognise these values, utilising them to inform strategy, the individual and the community can assign further constructs to stimulate, legitimise and rationalise their practice. The context of these motivational notions has been provided by interviewees discussed alongside existing literature, and analysed robustly against Pierre Bourdieu's research and principles. What this concludes is that collectors navigate their field in multiple ways, with actions predominantly focussing on the accumulation of capital. This drives the collector's strategy, supporting decisions as to what to collect, as well as how and why they collect AMPs.

Overall, the thesis demonstrates that the methodology appropriated by collectors to their practice is vast and varied, but having an initial point to anchor such rationale to, for example those values assigned through production methods, can assist justification of such practice. This is made further relevant when considering the concept of 'collecting film', an ethereal medium which is often met with critical judgement in and of itself when considering the concept of fandom and the fan collector (Heljakka 2017; Geraghty 2018). Here, logic assigned by the collector provides context to ease any dissonance between conflicting concepts, the irrationality of collecting and engagement with cinema, against collecting art, and celebrating craft.

As such the notion of the 'instant collectible' is repositioned, where overengineering production processes to meet collector demands, imbues the object with the maximum potential capital return for the collector. Where Hughes suggests that collectors should: "stay away from instant collectible offerings […] these items are not even true collectibles" (1984: 25), the AMP distinguishes itself from such notions

via embellishing artistic integrity and printing method. This effectively allows the collector to ‘argue their case’ as to the cultural value they assign to AMPs, which in turn validates practice, while raising the profile of the subject matter in the eyes of the collector.

This becomes an aspect of the AMP collector’s consistent motivation to accumulate capital. Capital adds rationale to action, where if the collector adds a print to their collection, they also consider such values beyond its simple materiality. Economic capital in particular adds a point of credibility as a result of speculation, likely due to the universally understood concept of currency itself, and the desire to ‘make money’ being integral to the cultural infrastructure of developed countries. This contributes, along with other capital embodied in the AMP, towards the overall capital value the collector assigns to the AMP. Yet in many instances this capital is never realised as the object becomes housed within the collection, either framed and displayed in the home or, more often, archived. Hills would suggest that this becomes ‘potential fixed capital’ (Hills 2010) but collectors, when interviewed, find the act of ownership itself assuring, initiating the concept that this capital is still being ‘spent’ by the collector in securing and supporting their own ‘well-being’, allowing them to assert control over elements of their identity bound to the artefacts they collect.

Key Findings

AMPs represent a modern example of material culture that facilitates an opportunity for the collector to engage with and demonstrate elements of their desired identity. Where capital acquisition is intrinsic in rationalising AMP collecting for the individual, supporting and justifying practice, notions of capital can support elements of identity itself (Husu 2013). This presents a different nuanced method to review collecting

practice which is yet to be fully established elsewhere as Bourdieu's work is often only fleetingly addressed in other texts (Apparundai 1994; Danet and Katriel 1994; Geraghty 2018). Furthermore, given the values the collector, community, and producer associates with the AMP, collecting does not just contribute to identity but allows the collector to argue the credibility of those characteristics.

This provides further insight into the concept and motivations of the 'fan collector'. For Geraghty (2014) the individual is a fan of a text/various texts who collects related paraphernalia but in the case of AMPs, the interviewees balance the assignment of value across being a collector, being a film fan and being an art/print enthusiast. This is not to say that they could not simply be considered 'fans' of each of these distinct but interlinked areas, but it demonstrates a further complexity of what the 'fan collector' is, presenting an opportunity which conceptually requires further attention.

Where Geraghty also comments that: "what you have in your collection identifies your level of fandom" (2014: 181), the question as to how this is rationalised/strategized by the collector is in need of discussion. Understanding value structures linked to AMPs can assist with social hierarchy and group hierarchy (Hills 2007; Geraghty 2018), but also contributes to an internal subjectively assigned hierarchy where the collector theoretically designates their position based on their practice, which will be discussed shortly in relation to potential fixed capital. As the AMP is constructed around the elevation of subject matter, the subjectivity of hierarchical designation allows the fan collector to define their own connection to certain film properties. Collectors believe that as the custodian of the AMP they engage with the text beyond the average fan, evidenced in their drive toward the

exclusivity of AMPs, consistently noted as an important aspect of strategy by interviewees.

The concept of custodianship is further important to the AMP collector, as it allows them to both protect the aforementioned capital bound to the AMP, as well as those interests which are integral to their very personality. The AMP, via its tangibility and subsequent fragility, demands care from the collector, a mutual relationship fulfilling the collectors desire to physically control and maintain their identity.

In recent years Heljakka (2017) notes the need to further address the strategies employed by adult collectors of popular culture objects. Though Heljakka highlights the growing market of toy collecting, the AMP represents similar concerns within an associated field. This thesis considers such strategies against Bourdieusian principles, highlighting the drive toward capital accumulation linked to action. Where limitations are enforced though production values, they provide distinction to influence strategy which befits collector's motivation to construct, control and demonstrate identity.

The value collectors assign to the concept of the AMP as a piece of art, differentiates it from mainstream movie posters while simultaneously raising any consideration paid to the object by those internal and external to the field. 'Art' as a construct is utilised by the collector to justify and promote the AMPs credibility, conceptually used to bypass the literal image meaning it does not really matter what it represents as long as the AMP can be easily defined as 'art'. Collectors and producers borrow core elements from the history of poster and film poster illustration, which in themselves now demonstrate cultural, sociological, political and effectively economic value based partly on artistic merit. Where these elements would naturally be integral to traditional notions of provenance, the AMP reappropriates this to grant a version of

what could be termed ‘immediate provenance’, further honed alongside printing method. To the collector the AMP is no longer a poster, it is definitively a piece of art.

Therefore, AMPs represent an example of how production values can shift the perceptions of the previously criticised ‘instant collectible’, art and craft value being the antithesis to modern studio posters, which collectors consider a disservice to the films they represent. Where it has been suggested that the AMP collector may distinguish themselves from the casual fan through enacting their practice, they fundamentally wish to see film, an element which they base a significant aspect of their interests and identity around, championed through the film poster in a manner that is exploited in the production values of the AMP.

To this end printing practice raises multiple elements of interest. Where artwork separates the AMP from studio materials, screenprinting becomes the core point of differentiation, interviewees commonly noting they would not add an AMP to their collection if it was not screenprinted. This assists the AMP collector’s strategy allowing them to argue their case for the screenprint as a skilled, handmade, artisanal craft process, acting in direct opposition to digital printing. Here digital printing has no value to the collector because it is commonplace, offering direct reproduction at the touch of a button, and ultimately diluting the value that the collector wants to (and perhaps needs to) assign to the AMP in that any element of its ‘uniqueness’ is to be absorbed by the collector.

This value may be best understood in the growing trend amongst AMP producers to recreate and reproduce iconic posters from film history, where the collector values the pedigree of the historic artwork but chooses not to seek out an original copy in favour of a screenprint as part of a limited-edition print run. Exclusivity

and craft are necessary to the collector in their practice, if they are to rationalise their strategy to collect AMPs.

This is relative to the fact that nearly every aspect of practice becomes an opportunity to obtain various forms of capital, where production relies on being able to imbue the AMP with capital value. Whereas it is easy to understand economic capital (the cost of production, sales price, aftermarket cost), the value of art and craft pushes the AMP beyond this into cultural/subcultural and social capital. Where a mainstream poster could demonstrate such values, the AMP seeks to maximises these values. Capital is therefore used in symbiosis, cultural obtained through production meets subcultural in subject matter, the former generating the potential for wider acceptability of the latter. This is the essence of what a pop culture instant collectible should be, effectively raising the general cultural appeal bound to the physical object to raise the profile of the text (film) in turn making it more acceptable for the collector to demonstrate their engagement in said text.

Tangibility itself is key to the practices surrounding AMP collecting. Where the digital age has facilitated the collector, it may have also been integral in generating a need to engage with physical ephemera (DeLio 2016). The AMP is effectively 'overengineered' to a point of becoming 'Hypertangible', where its physicality is embellished beyond its needs which generates to two broad conclusions. Firstly, it facilitates notions of 'immediate provenance', and secondly, it fulfils a desire expressed by collectors to own something inherently 'real', where realness for them is equivalent to authenticity. In a fragmented and ethereal world having something to hold, particularly that which relates to the identify the collector wishes to demonstrate, is fundamentally important in defining their actions. While this is relatable to existing

discussions surrounding ‘film collecting’, the concept of hypertangibility has yet to be considered, where previous studies have instead focused on the utilitarian by-products of the film industry (e.g. Bjarkman and VHS collecting 2014).

In a very practical sense, physicality also permits display where the significant history of posters being ‘exhibited’ in the home is associable but, as a subject, is underdiscussed. This is particularly true in regards to the reasoning behind the individuals want to display posters, and for the AMP it is both the subject matter of the poster, alongside its production, that provides characteristics important in demonstrating the collector’s identity, allowing it to physically enter the domestic environment. This therefore encourages literal engagement with the text, allowing the collector to demonstrate their kinship between themselves and the subject. Overengineering is therefore integral to the successfulness of the collector utilising the AMPs ‘immediate provenance’, where Geraghty (2018) discusses the value assigned to material culture being subject to the object existing in motion, intrinsic to time passing and its own history, the AMP either demonstrates these characteristics, or substitutes them through enhanced production values.

As a result, the nature of tangibility itself becomes valued by the collector, potentially representing capital in its own right, where a screenprint dominates the collector’s strategic hierarchy as to what to collect. It would not be the same for the collector to display anything other than a screenprinted AMP, as all else falls short. Therefore, overengineering effectively leads to hypertangibility, where the final result is more than just the sum of its parts.

Personal gratification as a result of collecting is expected, but where capital can generate such a response (e.g. financial reassurance through possessing economic

capital) interviewees comments suggest that it exists beyond traditional capital values. Where this can relate to Hills concept of 'potential fixed capital' (2010) it is apparent within AMP collecting that practice provides a more fundamental value akin to self-fulfilment through practice, which has been discussed in the thesis as 'personal capital'. As mentioned, this is relatable to speculative values being a point of reassurance, but also concerns such elements of practice as ownership itself.

AMP collectors rarely display their collections, favouring appropriate storage methods to house and protect their vast collection. There is a practicality to this in that individuals collect too many prints and it becomes expensive to frame them appropriately, initially querying why they would choose to gather such significant collections in the first place. This is likely concurrent with a desire to gain as much capital value as possible to validate interests and actions, which in itself questions the very notion of what 'fixed capital' really represents. It appears that for the AMP collector that this is still being 'spent', even when collections are archived, as gratification is definitively found in the act of ownership. Where capital is distributed to demonstrate identity to others, fixed capital is effectively spent by the AMP collector in supporting, protecting and maintaining one's identity to themselves. This does rely on the aforementioned depth of understanding (knowing the financial increase in value validates practice and offers security even if it is never to be sold), ultimately representing an interesting phenomenon found within collecting activity in need of further investigation.

A consistent motivation for collecting (relatable to AMPs, pop culture collecting and collecting in general) is the pursuit for nostalgia. While this is embedded in the AMP relative to illustrative style and subject matter, it is its physicality that it allows it

to exist as an authentic trigger for the collector. It is apparent that collectors are trying to literally hold onto memories, AMPs assigning an element of permanence to their personal histories. This is again relatable to the value of self-assurance bound to collecting AMPs. Overengineering and hypertangibility legitimises the collector's choices, their decisions, and ultimately gives their identity a physical point of reference to subjectively assign value to. This is further emphasised in the importance collectors associate between their practice and their family/friends who operate in their domestic space. This is adjacent to previous reviews of collecting, where the family dynamic is often threatened as a result of practice, where the ability to shares one's identity and interests, while imparting one's history to others is possible as an AMP collector. It becomes a point of connection between individuals in the home. Ultimately Jack Durieux of Nautilus Art Prints summarises how the AMP collector envisions the value of this:

> It's not just a movie, it's your childhood and that is the most important thing about these posters, it takes you back. They are time machines!
>
> (Personal Interview 2016)

Topics to Consider

Several topics have come to light as part of this process which could be reviewed in further depth. The legal processes surrounding AMP production have been eluded to in the need for galleries to purchase licenses to produce posters. In the digital age, where imagery and content is abundantly available, concepts related to Intellectual Property (IP) law (such as actors likeness rights and transformative use of imagery) present a complex system of legal and ethical concerns which influence AMP production and distribution. Linked to this, the growing interest from AMP collectors to

commission their own artwork in small, like-minded groups, represents fan engagement and content generation that is interesting in its own right, but also highlights a side of production which sits in a 'grey area' of the legal use of IP. While there is no room to explore this here, this is another element of fan activity which has yet to be fully investigated.

There is a significant amount of potential to apply the ideas addressed here to other collectors including, but not limited to, collectors of popular culture. The AMP demonstrates an artefact that is not only produced as an 'Instant Collectible', but one which enforces artistic and craft qualities (valued by the collector). As such it represents an area of study which appears incredibly specific, but the relevance of which can overlap into a number of expanding areas of fan collector interests. From action figures, to replica props, to comic books, to steelbooks, the potential to collect contemporary popular culture merchandise that houses reputable and desirable production values is becoming more evident. Ideally this could transcend into a contemporary review of how individuals collect the ethereality of 'film', and how fans control and exercise their interests in texts they deem fundamentally important to their identity.

A Self-Indulgent End

I became aware of Alternative Movie Posters in 2011, seeing Olly Moss' design for *Moon* (dir. Duncan Jones 2009) at the back of an issue of Creative Review magazine. The print was long sold out but after a bit of research I tracked down the burgeoning AMP community along with several galleries/distributors. Not long after I ordered a *Metropolis* (dir. Fritz Lang 1927) AMP by Craig Drake from the Mondo website, and a large cardboard tube arrived at my door several weeks later. I vividly recall carefully

taking off an endcap and removing the packaged poster inside. It was wrapped in brown paper and when unrolled the print had a layer of tissue on its surface to protect the inks. The poster was nothing like I had expected. The small compressed image on the website could not come close to the presence emitting from the 24” x 36” screenprint laying on my living room floor. The colour, the tactility, the smell of the ink, I was hooked. Not long after a tube would arrive at my door every couple of weeks or so, the collection growing as AMP after AMP was bought either directly from galleries, or more commonly on the aftermarket (eBay). The feeling Higgins described in the introduction is the same feeling I had when I managed to ‘score’, the ‘thrill of the hunt’ that is so engrained in collecting being part of my own visceral engagement with the practice.

Several years later and I had amassed quite a collection. Along the way I honed my taste, learnt the nuances of AMP collecting, became part of commission groups and acquired the shortcuts to give me a better chance of grabbing prints online as soon as they dropped. I even headed to the Thought Bubble convention held annually in Leeds most years as it became one of the few events in the UK where collectors, artists and sellers of AMPs came together. My routine involved getting up at daybreak, slinging my portable poster tube carrier over my shoulder and heading to queue. The event is usually held in Autumn and it was not rare to be stood in next to minus temperatures for hours just to hold my place in line and get a shot at the most in demand prints as soon as the doors opened. For me, it was more than just a hobby yet I could not quite tell you what it was and it was this question that started this thesis. Why was I so invested metaphorically and financially in this pursuit, why did I own hundreds of AMPs knowing full well that they were never going to be displayed.

In researching this thesis, the theoretical perspectives surrounding collecting gave reasoning to my interests, providing a basis to acknowledge some of the allure engrained into my practice. However, it was the collectors that truly gave me insight, their comments providing the words to describe the motivations that I struggled to articulate. Their experiences, their passions, their strategies were all my own. We all started out as film fans, yet collecting AMPs transcended this. Though we may never have discussed it prior to interviews it is reassuring that we share the same opinions, for example, the despair of how the lack of quality in mainstream poster art is a disservice to cinema itself. As a brief aside, while most conventions have been cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak, San Diego Comic Con offered a livestream of a number of its scheduled panels in lieu of fans being able to physically attend. One such panel this year was titled, 'Masters of the Illustrated Film Poster', and featured guests from notable poster illustrators Drew Struzan, Greg Hildebrant and William Stout, to modern designers Akiko Stehrenberger and Paul shipper, to AMP artist Rory Kurtz. It is reassuring to see that there is an interest in artistic quality in film poster design, and who knows perhaps there is a resurgence on the horizon.

Overall, this has been an enriching experience, as the research and interviews provided context and rationale for my initial inability to understand my practice. However, while most AMP collectors interviewed could not directly explain why they commit to practice in a clear, concise and logical way, they did all agree that they simply love to collect them. I now own the Moon poster that started it all and, like many collectors I have far more AMPs than I know what to do with, meticulously archiving most of them in acid free sleeves inside my plan chest which dominates my living room. I have my reasons to collect, and this thesis has helped me understand most of them. However, above all else I still get excited when those tubes arrive at my door,

and there is something reassuring about leaving a slight element of the passion to collect unexplained. Otherwise, I fear it would take all the fun out of owning those hundreds of pieces of fancy paper.

Appendix

Key Players and Gatekeepers Interviewed

While this thesis has focused on the opinions of the collectors themselves, further context has been derived from some of the key individuals working in the AMP field.

James Park

Park is owner and founder Black Dragon Press based in the UK. Set up in 2014 to both offer variety in the type of films portrayed as AMPs, and to offer an opportunity for UK collectors to obtain prints closer to home, Park has made a success of his business gaining a reputation within the field for focusing on those movies less served by his competitors. Their first release for Herzog's Nosferatu sold out immediately, prompting further ventures into the directors' work. A series of AMPs focusing on Tarkovsky, plus posters for films ranging from Haxan to Hunt for the Wilderpeople, demonstrated their versatility and eclectic taste.

Nico Delort

James Henshaw

Henshaw is co-owner and founder of Vice Press based in the UK. Working with already successful AMP artist Matt Ferguson, Park co-founded Vice press in 2015. Early poster releases for British films, Attack the Block and High Rise brought initial success, leading on to work with other UK institutions, notably Aardman to produce posters for the Wallace and Gromit series. A vast range of movies have been represented by Vice Press, including Jurassic Park, John Carpenter's The Thing, and the Cornetto Trilogy.

Matt Taylor

Brock Higgins

Higgins is co-owner and founder of Skuzzles Prints based in Canada. After collecting AMPs for a couple of years, mainly distributed by Mondo (MondoTees at the time), Higgins and his business partner set up Skuzzles to further engage with their passion in collecting. Though admittedly small scale in comparison, they continue to have great success in AMP production, releasing posters for the Bill and Ted films, Pumpkinhead, Robocop and Rocky 4.

Matt Ryan Tobin

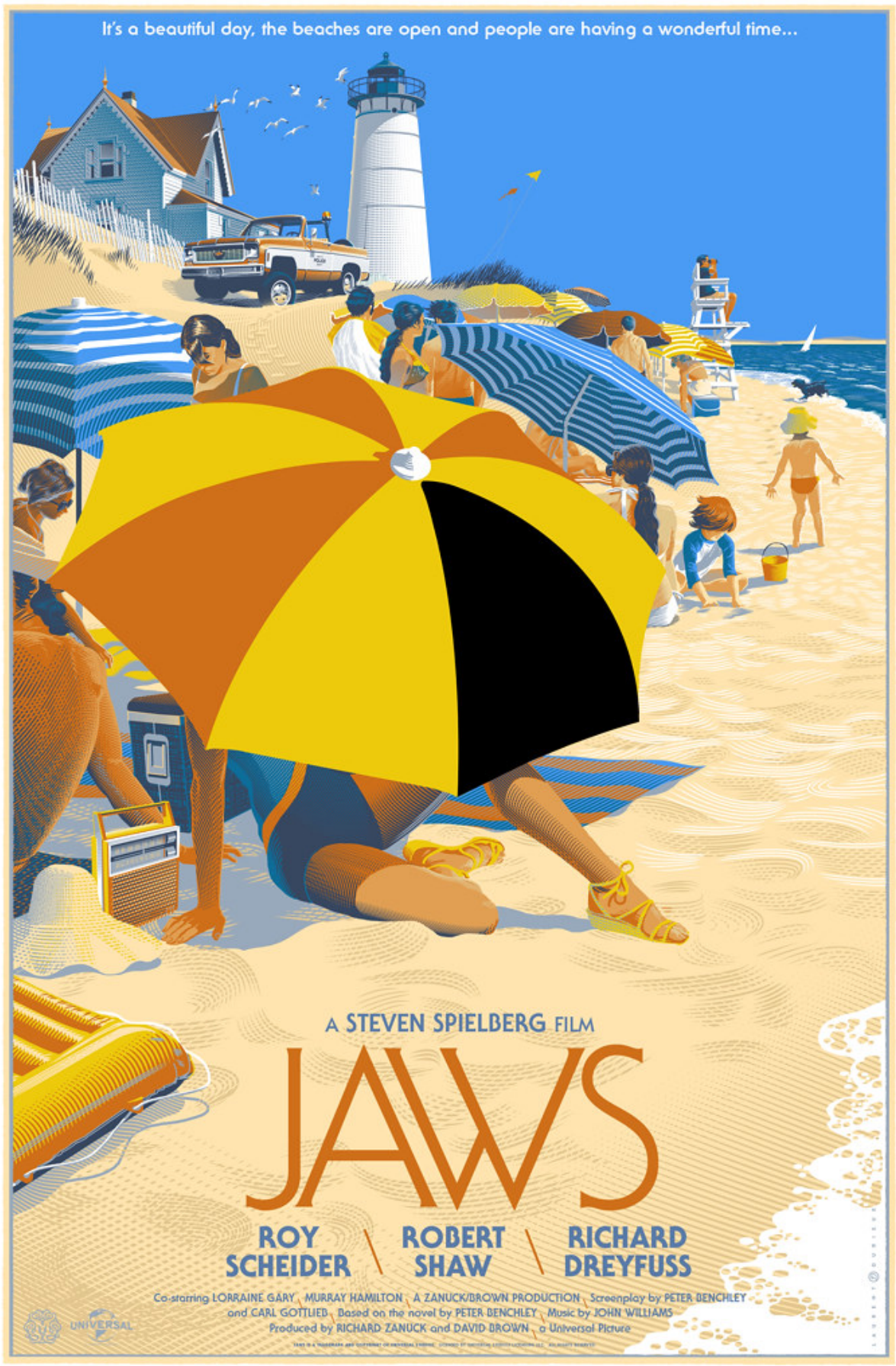
Jack Durieux

Durieux is co-owner and founder of Nautilus Art Prints based in Belgium. Durieux, an accomplished graphic designer, set up the business with his two other artistic brother in 2014 with a focus on European cinema. Initial collaborations with Jacques Tati's and Francois Trauffaut's estates, led to posters released being produced for Playtime and Mon Oncle, as well as Les 400 Coups and Le Dernier Metro. Nautilus focus strongly on producing quality artwork and quality screenprinting.

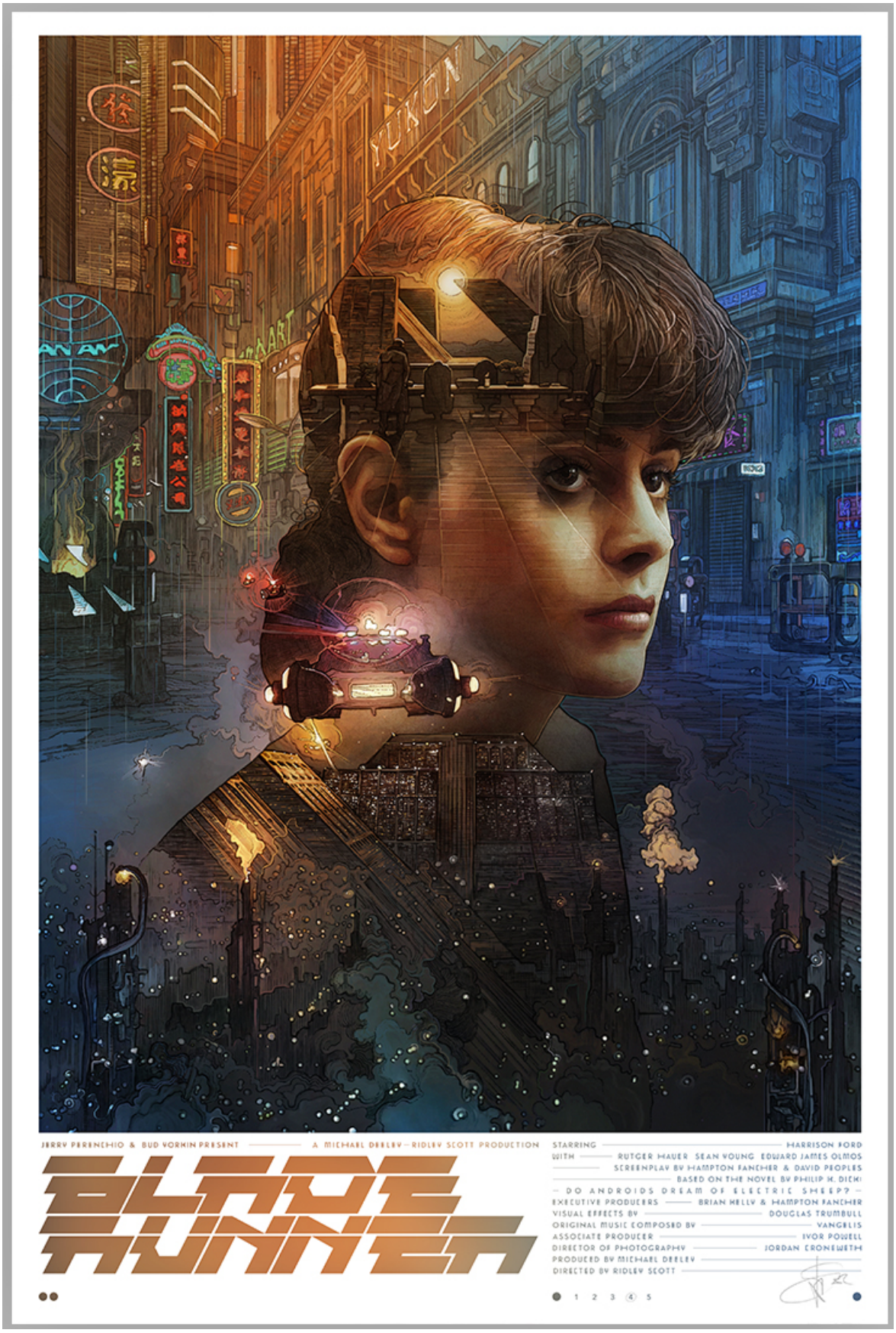
Tom Whalen

AMP Examples

Tyler Stout



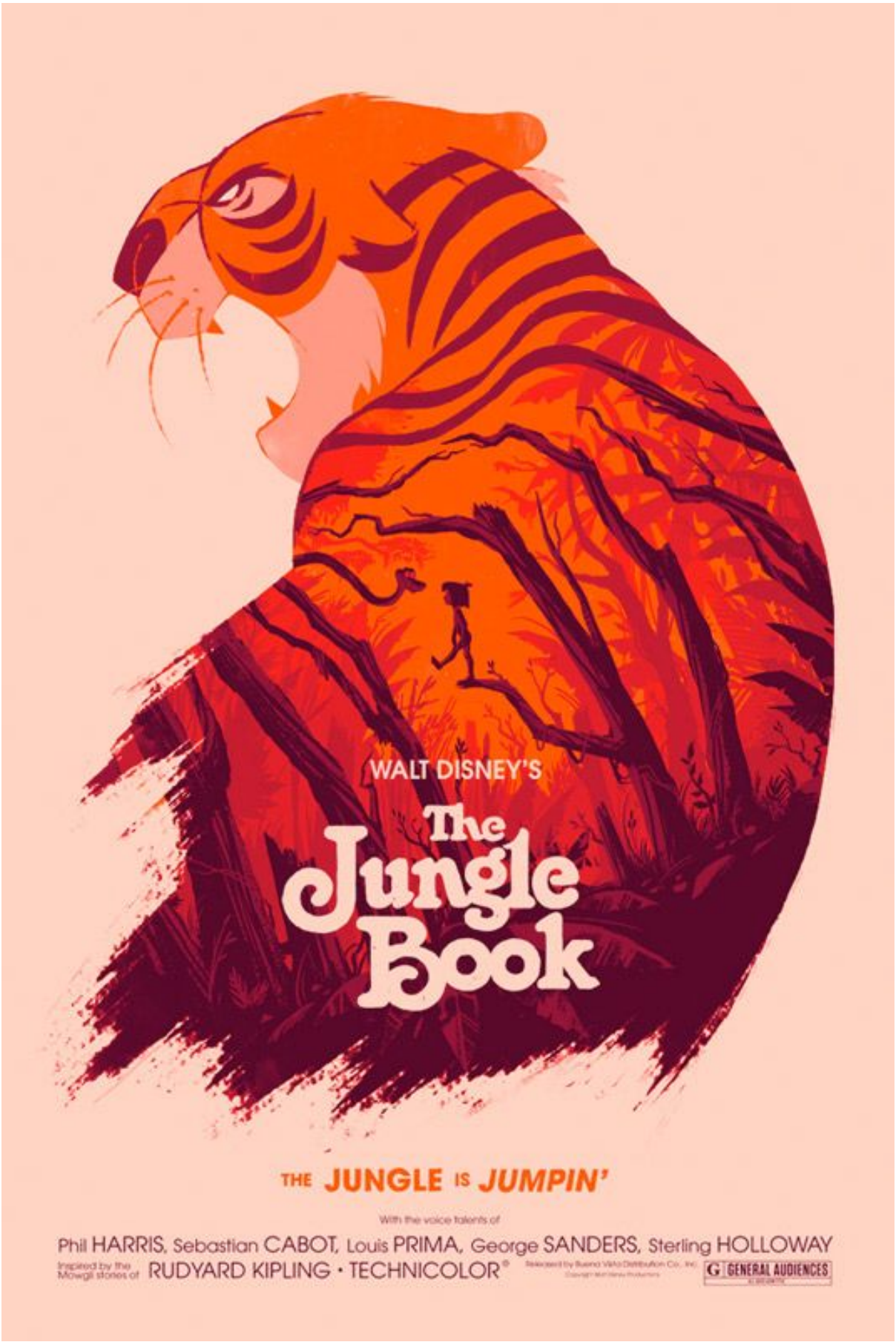
Laurent Durieux



Krzysztof Domaradzki


Drive
A NICOLAS WINDING REFN FILM
FILMDISTRICT
RYAN GOSLING "DRIVE" CAREY MULLIGAN BRYAN CRANSTON CHRISTINA HENDRICKS RON PERLMAN OSCAR ISAAC ALBERT BROOKS
BETH MICKLE MAT NEWMAN NEWTON THOMAS SIGEL, A.S.C. DAVID LANCASTER GARY MICHAEL WALTERS BILL LISCHAK LINDA MCDONOUGH JEFFREY STOTT PETER SCHLESSEL
MARC PLATT ADAM SIEGEL GIGI PRITZKER MICHEL LITVAK JOHN PALERMO JAMES SALLIS HOSSEIN AMINI NICOLAS WINDING REFN

Rory Kurtz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STAR TREK II
PARAMOUNT PICTURES AND MONDO PRESENT THE WRATH OF KHAN STARRING WILLIAM SHATNER LEONARD NIMOY AND DEFOREST KELLEY
JAMES DOOHAN WALTER KOENIG GEORGE TAKEI NICHELLE NICHOLS ALSO STARRING BIBI BESCH AND PAUL WINFIELD AS TERRELL INTRODUCING KIRSTIE ALLEY AS SAAVIK
AND STARRING RICARDO MONTALBAN AS KHAN MUSIC COMPOSED BY JAMES HORNER EXECUTIVE CONSULTANT GENE RODDENBERRY BASED ON STAR TREK CREATED BY GENE RODDENBERRY
HARVE BENNETT SCREENPLAY BY JACK B. SOWARDS STORY BY HARVE BENNETT AND JACK B. SOWARDS PRODUCED BY ROBERT SALLIN DIRECTED BY NICHOLAS MEYER
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the hardest thing to face...
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Starring
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SAM ROCKWELL "MOON" DOMINIQUE McELLIGOTT KAYA SCODELARIO BENEDICT WONG MATT BERRY MACLOLM STEWART
CASTING DIRECTORS JEREMY ZIMMERMAN AND MANUEL PURO MAKE-UP AND HAIR DESIGNER KAREN BRYAN DAWSON COSTUME DESIGNER JANE PETRIE CONCEPTUAL DESIGN GAVIN ROTHERY
PRODUCTION DESIGNER TONY NOBLE VFX & CHARACTER ANIMATION BY CINESITE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY GARY SHAW MUSIC BY CLINT MANSELL EDITOR NICOLAS GASTER LINE PRODUCER JULIA VALENTINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL HENRY BILL ZYSBLATT TREVOR BEATTIE BIL BUNGAY CO-PRODUCERS NICKY MOSS ALEX FRANCIS MARK FOLIGNO STEVE MILNE
STORY BY DUNCAN JONES WRITTEN BY NATHAN PARKER PRODUCED BY STUART GENEGAN TRUDIE STYLER DIRECTED BY DUNCAN JONES
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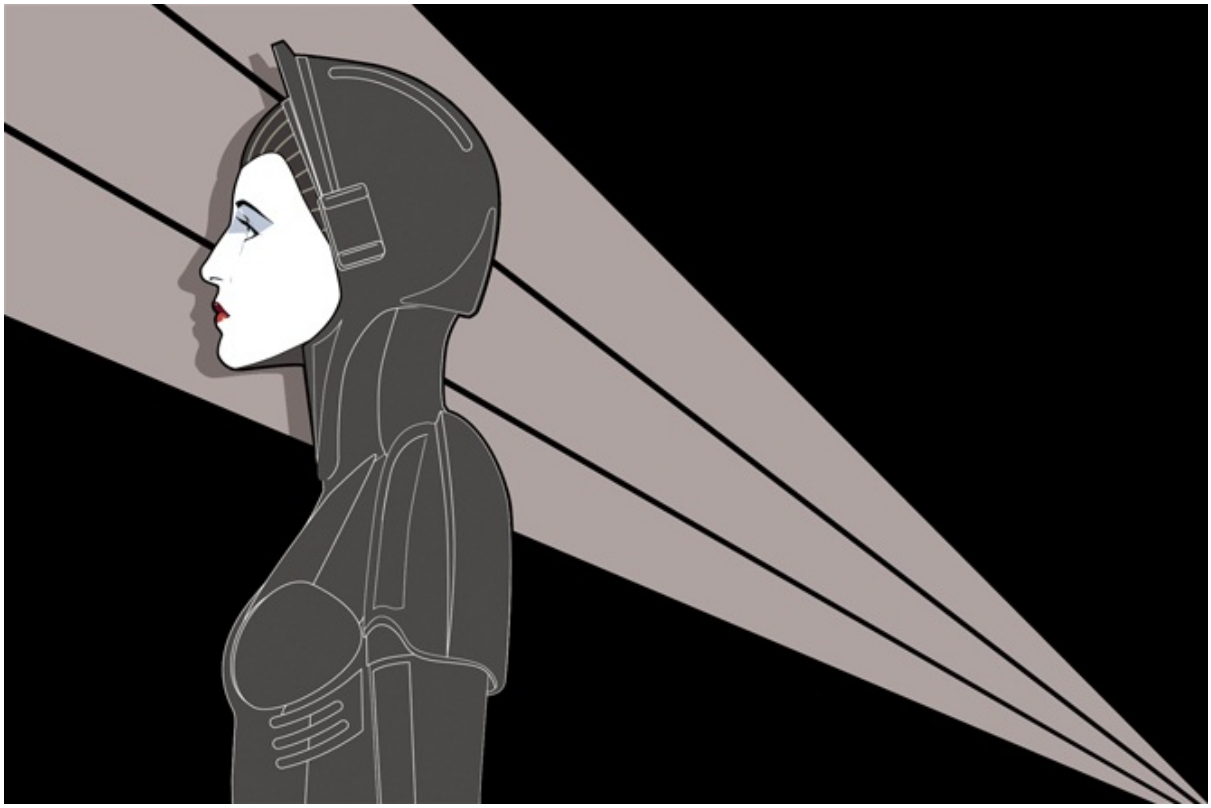
Olly Moss



Craig Drake

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